Chronicles

August 1997

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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The Meaning of Death

"But if it die,
it bringeth forth much fruit"

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On the Christian Right

Mr. Mawyer's article in the April issue ("The Future of the Christian Right") is absolutely correct in its analysis of the ills of the Republican Party. The congressional elections were one more indicator of the bedrock traditional values of most American voters. Nevertheless, the GOP leadership proved itself to be strongly though underhandedly liberal in its convictions and thoroughly ashamed of its pro-family supporters. It can fairly be surmised that it regarded Bill Clinton's victory as a partial blessing insofar as it kept the Buchananite hordes from the castle keep.

It is also true, as Mr. Mawyer points out, that the "pro-family movement's most visible leaders" betrayed their rank and file constituency by supporting Dole in the first place and then not requiring him to address the issues of burning concern to traditionalists: namely, abortion, homosexuals in the military, subsidized cultural decay, and national security. Mr. Mawyer is right: the only moral course of action left to conservatives of conscience is to construct a new party.

However, Mr. Mawyer failed to mention that the task has already begun. The U.S. Taxpayers Party headquartered in Vienna, Virginia, was founded in 1992 to return the American Republic to its biblical and constitutional foundations. Any conservative of Mr. Mawyer's persuasion who reads the U.S. Taxpayers Party platform will discern the integrity of its philosophical grounding. It stands unequivocally for the defense of the unborn, national sovereignty, national security, constitutional restoration, and the dismantlement of the plunder state with its attendant class of anti-religious and anti-American agents. The U.S. Taxpayers Party, though underfunded and almost ignored by the media, battled formidable obstacles to gain ballot access in 21 states in 1992 and 39 states in 1996, when Pat Buchanan almost kicked the GOP habit to run for President on the USTP ticket.

The road ahead is difficult. Most conservatives still dream about saving the big tent party. But as time goes on, more and more of them will come to see that standing on principle is the only practical, as well as honorable, course to take. As George Washington said, "If, to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterward defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest can repair. The event is in the hand of God."

—Alan Potter
Secretary, Virginia Taxpayers Party
Gainesville, VA

Martin Mawyer's April essay made one good point. I will put it my way: if the Christian Right remains in the hip pocket of the Republican Party, it should plan to get sat on a lot. He calls for a third party. I ask: If the U.S. Taxpayers Party doesn't qualify as a pro-life, pro-Christian, pro-free enterprise third party, why doesn't it? There is already a third party: the Libertarian Party. Mr. Mawyer is in fact calling for a fifth party. Even in a parliamentary system, this would not make sense.

There is no American example since the 1850's of a successful third party. Teddy Roosevelt's fling as Taft's spoiler in 1912 was successful only from the point of view of Progressives in the Democratic Party. Harry Truman, as unpopular as he was in 1948, was not thwarted by two Democratic splinter parties. To think that an openly Christian national third party in America can do anything except absorb politically naive people's time, money, and hopes is itself naive, unless you are expecting a social cataclysm in which the prevailing political order is either overthrown or disintegrates—which I do expect, by the way.

Without an unforeseen, "exogenous" event of this magnitude, any suggestion that three centuries of American political history can be overturned is as unconservative a proposal as one might imagine. The premise of conservatism is that social change should be slow and be extended by precedents except when outside forces beyond our control disrupt matters. American history has never embraced religious political parties, not even in colonial days.

The Christian political right is less than two decades old. It has barely reached the age of consent, let alone maturity. I find it difficult to believe that the same Christians who have yet to pull their children out of the local public school system are ready and able to re-

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place the Republican Party.

When an openly Christian political party consistently elects mayors and congressmen, we can then begin to talk about a national third party. The Bible tells us to become successful at little things before taking on bigger things. Jesus' parable of the talents is the proper standard: "His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:23). This principle applies to politics. We should not dream great dreams of national political triumph through a third party when we have yet to win a single county government out of 3,300.

—Gary North
Tyler, TX

On Quebec

While working up to his conclusion that "the first task of a moral human being is not to play the stranger to our friends and judge the world as if we were gods," Thomas Fleming ("Other People," March) finds it necessary to issue this stirring proclamation: "It is time for Anglo-Americans, in Canada and the United States, to make up their minds once and for all that the French are in Quebec to stay."

I'd be very much surprised if Dr. Fleming could find anyone up here who needs such advice. In fact, a great many Canadians have come to see a truly sovereign, self-supporting Quebec as a necessary step to English Canada's regeneration.

It's been a long time since French Canada's otherness was considered a problem to be solved through assimilation. But while Quebec's national institutions and traditions have been strengthened over the last 30 years or so, the opposite holds true for those of English Canada. It's no coincidence. Bilingualism and biculturalism, Ottawa's *cause célèbre* during the mid-1960's, were forced on English Canada with far greater fervor than on Quebec. As predecessors of multiculturalism, "bi and bi" can now be seen as the first attack in the war that engulfs us.

Economically, too, Quebec is a liability. The province benefits disproportionately from government jobs, federal patronage contracts, interprovincial trade preferences, and a form of interprovincial socialism called transfer payments, which channel billions of federal tax dollars annually to Quebec, mostly from the two most westerly, least French provinces. The cost of maintaining French-language government services and state-owned French-language television and radio stations in all parts of Canada, despite the overall tiny French-speaking population (less than five percent outside of Quebec), helps explain Canada's monstrous levels of debt and taxation. Those "millions of French-speakers in Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia" to whom Dr. Fleming refers do not exist, unless there has been a dramatic increase in Haitian immigration. The 1991 census figures (the most recent available) show that Ontario, with a total population of 10,085,000, has 464,000 people whose first language is French; in New Brunswick the figures are 724,000 and 237,000. In Nova Scotia and elsewhere in Canada, most French-speakers are transplanted Québécois who work for the government or state-owned corporations. There they provide French-language services to other transplanted Québécois who work for the government or state-owned corporations.

Despite the much-vaunted minority status of the Québécois, bloc voting and political truculence have given Canada prime ministers from their province, for 26 of the last 28 years, a disproportionately French federal cabinet and bureaucracy and a political elite that relies on Quebec for much of its support. It matters not at all whether members of this elite are federalists or separatists. From an Anglo perspective, both are dedicated to ethnic preferences, social engineering, and government expansion.

The most frightening scenario is not that Quebec will secede, but that it will perpetuate its current ambiguity. The watered-down proposal for separation now being sold to the Québécois resembles not so much a self-supporting country as a comfortably well-off but financially dependent Indian reservation.

—Greg Klein
Whitehorse, Yukon

On the American Empire

In just a few years, Samuel Francis has graduated from columnist to philosopher of history who observes past and present and draws the correct conclusions from both. His article in the June issue ("The Price of Empire") offers a balanced panorama, a nice surprise in the avalanche of talk about "democracy in Zaire" and "Western values." But in one regard, he still displays the conservative prejudice.

The Roman farmer and his American counterpart, the small businessman, are robbed, Francis writes, by the large plantations and the modern transnational companies. That was indeed the case with the Roman peasant whose choice was between decades of service in the army or a miserable life on the dole in Rome. But Americans today enjoy the benefits of empire when, for example, they pay far less for gas and many other goods and services than one does anywhere in Europe.

Our "isolationists" enjoy the best of two worlds: patriotic slogans and a high (imperial) standard of living. The trouble is, at some point the logic of empire will interrupt this heaven on earth. Samuel Francis is mature enough to crush the main taboo: "It cannot happen here!" It is already happening. History does have its laws and its will.

—Thomas Molnar
Ridgewood, NJ

On Reverse Discrimination

I would like to thank Nicholas Stix for his March Correspondence ("Letter From New York City: The War on White Teachers"). I taught foreign language in a public high school until about five years ago. We had an incident in which a custodian, who was also part of the administration friendship circle, physically threatened one of my fellow teachers for bringing up an issue involving the distribution of stipend positions for activities and sports in our school. The inquiry showed that the principal was illegally giving out the extra positions to people not covered by our contract. As a result, the custodian lost a few stipends. The custodian then turned on this German teacher. He chased her down the hall, followed her into the women's lounge, shaking his fist, and told her what he'd do to her.

The custodian was black, the foreign language teacher was white. And you have already probably guessed what hap-

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pened: the white teacher was deemed the problem. Word soon spread that the foreign language department was racist. The result? The foreign language department has been overturned and its members replaced by less competent teachers—most of us left.

The technique works well: play the race card, and you seldom lose. Without this method, the politicization of our schools might not have been so easy.

—Marty Gale
Mercer Island, WA

On Manifest Disaster

As the British captain said to the Italian major who had captured him during the Abyssinian campaign, "No one likes war, but you chaps don't even make the effort." After reading the June issue of *Chronicles* ("Manifest Disaster"), I get the feeling that not only do you chaps not like the U.S.A., you don't even make the effort.

The conduct of the United States in World War II and in Vietnam was certainly not irreproachable, but at least one could argue military reasons for Dresden and Hiroshima, which the Germans could not do for Auschwitz. And regarding our behavior vis-à-vis Serbs, Croats, and Muslims in former Yugoslavia, it seems either ill-considered or downright perverse, or both. We seem to support non-Christians against Christians and Muslims against Christians and increasingly against Jews, or at least Israelis.

But reading your June issue one might get the impression that our government's policy is based on the desire to do as much harm as possible without being too obvious about it. If this really *is* our policy, then pointing out flaws and errors will only encourage the scoundrels; but if it isn't, these massive, detailed, bad-tempered attacks are hardly likely to influence anyone to change.

—Harold O.J. Brown
Deerfield, IL

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

NATO has three new members: Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. The event has taken place at a time when Europe is as stable and unthreatened as it has ever been in history.

The Russians—regardless of political persuasion—are profoundly disturbed at the shift eastwards of the limit of NATO's Article 5 guarantee, which postulates that a perceived attack on any member state is an attack on all, including America. They see NATO enlargement as America's equivalent of Russian missiles in Cuba, except that it is harder to explain: in Khrushchev's heyday there was a Cold War on, and today there is presumably none. Enlargement tells them that Russia is still deemed dangerous, unstable, and untrustworthy in Washington.

The long-term effect of this decision is contained in the warning uttered by George Kennan, veteran diplomat and Kremlinologist, some months ago: "NATO enlargement would be the most fateful error of American policy in the entire post Cold War era. It will inflame nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russian opinion, have an adverse side effect on the development of Russian democracy and restore the atmosphere of Cold War to East-West relations."

Our allies in Europe, too, remain unimpressed by Secretary of State Albright's exultant exclamation that "the new NATO can vanquish old hatreds, promote integration, create a secure environment for prosperity and deter violence in the region where two world wars and the Cold War began." Some quietly suggest that, if membership in NATO is the key to all those blessings, then perhaps NATO should be extended to the countries of Central America, Equatorial Africa, and the Middle East as well. According to the *Times* of London, "ask Britain's politicians or diplomats about NATO enlargement and they give a despairing shrug. It is like global warming or drug cartels."

To state it succinctly, NATO enlargement threatens peace in Europe and undermines American security. It offers three small nations a near-meaningless guarantee (for no American President will risk Boston for Bialystok) while encouraging them to be less cautious in their relations with Russia. While Madeleine Albright pleads with Europe's skeptics to stop looking at enlargement as a "zero-sum game," she has forced a minus-sum game on them, and an impossible commitment on us. Since it is patently obvious that NATO enlargement is devoid of any strategic logic, military necessity, or ideological merit, it is time to ask, "*Cui bono*?"

American defense contractors, to start with. All new NATO members will have to standardize their weaponry and equipment—currently of Soviet origin—with their Western allies. They will buy American, for they know in whose good books they need to remain. Prague, Warsaw, and Budapest will spend billions over the next few years on advanced weapons they do not need, cannot afford, and are unable to use effectively for self-defense—to the delight of Grumman, British Aerospace, Lockheed Martin, McDonnell Douglas, et al. If Russia is forced by all this to devote more of its meager liquidity to armaments, so much the better for the merchants of death, who will finally have the "proof" that the Big Bad Bear had remained bad all along.

But the main beneficiaries of the new, Greater NATO will be the enemies of European civilization and Christendom, whether inside the Beltway or in the Islamic world. To the Washingtonian foreign policy "elite"—neoconservatives and liberals alike—the enemy is still in the East. The Serb today, the Russian tomorrow—and the Greek had better take notice, lest the Turk be unleashed for another bout of ethnic cleansing, the likes of which we've seen in Smyrna in 1922, in Constantinople in 1955, and in Cyprus in 1974.

In their heart of hearts they fear the true unity of Europe—East and West—and its rediscovery of its common roots and heritage. They are not content with

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the moral, spiritual, and demographic wasteland they have created in what used to be Christendom; they are plotting the final showdown—in the tradition of the infamous Fourth Crusade, almost 800 years ago, which allowed the Ottomans to sweep across Asia Minor, the Balkans, and up the Danubian plain all the way to Vienna.

What else is the meaning of not merely preserving NATO—now that the threat which created it is gone—but extending it eastwards? In this context it becomes clear that one supplementary motive for the kind of policy the American government has pursued in the Balkans over the past half-decade was to set up the political, legal, military, and above all psychological precedent for the demolition of Russia as a great power, its permanent exclusion from "Europe," and its consignment to the depths of the Eurasian land-mass, with a *cordon sanitaire* of New World Order satellites around it.

Failure to remember what has gone on before condemns us to remain forever children. The hubris of Albright, Lake, and Clinton is the path which Washington and Jefferson forbade America ever to take. Given the choice, the people of this country would never opt for it, but—living under the regime of "managed mass democracy"—they are seemingly powerless to prevent it. *Aufwiedersehen* in Riga!

—Srdja Trifkovic

THE LEGA NORD has not been cowed by its mediocre showing in the spring elections. Virtually alone among Italian political leaders, Umberto Bossi has condemned both the "humanitarian" mission of the Italian army in Albania and the continued refusal of the government to keep out the so-called refugees, most of whom have spent the past ten years looking for a pretext for going to Italy. As Bossi told members of the Italian parliament, "I've been to New York and seen a multicultural society. I don't want that for Italy." Meanwhile, Gianfranco Fini, the leader of the post-fascist Alleanza Nazionale, has stuck fast by his senior political partner, financier Silvio Berlusconi (leader of the Forza Italia), who supports the government's policies on Albania. So much for Fini being a fascist: he is not even a nationalist anymore.

In the middle of May, a few days after I arrived in Rome, a Venetian separatist group calling itself the *serenissimo governo* used a homemade "mini-panzer" in their capture of the campanile of San Marco in Venice. The press was quick to point out contacts between this extremist movement and the Lega, and prominent journalists and politicians began calling for a crackdown on Bossi. The "leader" responded by declaring, "We are revolutionaries, not terrorists"—an admission which, if made in America (where possession of the writings of Jefferson, Locke, or Sam Adams is evidence of a hate crime) could get him at least five to ten in a federal prison.

A day or two later, Bossi's followers peacefully occupied the same campanile, which has become the symbol for the Venetian longing for autonomy. Parliamentary debate was hot, as *leghisti* responded to attacks on the Lega's "terrorism" by demanding an investigation into police brutality. Mario Borghezio, a Lega leader from Piedmont, told the minister of justice, "You live in a ministry that is a cemetery of papers and mysteries." (I was supposed to meet with Borghezio the night of my arrival, but a strike by French air traffic controllers delayed my arrival—my apologies, *onorevole* Borghezio.)

National Public Radio's Sylvia Poggioli, the most accurate source of South European news to which Americans have access, pointed out the irony, that "*campanilismo*" (i.e., attachment to the local bell tower) is a derogatory term for small-town chauvinism, but I have been telling Italian friends for some time now that "*campanilismo*" sums up the best qualities of the Italian character.

The attacks on the Lega continue to mount, even as the leader seemed to be seeking reconciliation with former friends who support his vision up to the point of a confederal Italian republic but balk at open talk of secession. Gianfranco Miglio, the political theorist who abused Bossi in his kiss-and-tell *Io, Bossi, e La Lega*, is now speaking respectfully about his former ally. But Bossi's critics claim he is running scared, because the majority of his followers refuse to support his more radical goals. To silence this divisive criticism, the Lega sponsored an informal "referendum" in Padania, on the question of autonomy and independence, and nearly four million *leghisti* turned out to endorse the senator's position—which is autonomy for the North, in or out of an Italian union. So much for divisions within the ranks.

By mid-June the Italian parliament was taking up the question of a new constitution, which will probably have both presidential and federalist trappings. The leaders of the Lega remain, so far, unimpressed. Meanwhile in Venice, a Gay Pride march turned into a militant demonstration against the Lega. With enemies like these, who needs friends?

Italy continues to serve as the political laboratory of the Western world. From the days of the Roman Republic and Empire, of the medieval communes and Renaissance despotisms, down to the *Risorgimento* (their war of Northern aggression) and the establishment of fascism, Italian political leaders have charted a course for their less brilliant Germanic and Celtic cousins, who repaid them by borrowing the ideas and institutions and despising their creators. A year ago, a German politician asked me why I wasted time on Italy and Serbia. "In Europe today, only Germany matters." In fact, Germans may be moving, ever so slowly, toward nationalism and away from the New World Order adventures of Chancellor Kohl, but the real ferment continues to be, for the moment, in Italy and in the Balkans.

—Thomas Fleming

PEYTON PLACE is the name of the North Dakota bar where First Lieutenant Kelly Flinn went to relax, and the name sums up her case very well. It has been a soap opera all through. And as often happens in the soaps, the worst characters prove to be the most popular. Thanks to her healthy good looks, her position as a female ground-breaker, her well-connected attorney, and an effective p.r. campaign which garnered her friends in Congress and supportive mail from a half-informed public, Flinn has retained her freedom if not her Air Force career.

Court-martialed for disobedience, lying, adultery, and fraternization (the last for a brief tryst with a Senior Airman), Flinn was given the relatively light punishment of a general discharge. Her career as the first woman B-52 pilot is over. Denied the honorable discharge she sought, she will probably not be allowed to fly for the Reserves, and she will have to pay back one-year's worth of Academy tuition, about $18,000. But considering that all the charges made against her seem to be true, and that she faced a pos-

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sible prison term of nine and a half years, she has been fortunate.

In an effort to deflect criticism for prosecuting Flinn for her private life, Air Force Chief of Staff General Ronald Fogleman said the case was really about lying and insubordination, not "the adultery thing." Yet adultery is a crime under the Uniform Code of Military Justice because it is a destructive and dishonorable action that can undermine an officer's ability to command and certainly reflects badly on the service he or she represents. It can make a serviceman or woman vulnerable to blackmail. And it can lead to the very behavior Flinn showed: lying to superiors and disobedience to direct orders.

Flinn's supporters do not see it that way. Demonstrating beautifully just how the Republican Party supports family values, Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying, "We have just got to account for the fact that men and women are going to have relationships that lead to marriage and perfectly wholesome relationships, and we should not wind up punishing them by dragging them through courts-martial in every instance."

The fact that Flinn and Marc Zigo were sexually involved within a week of their meeting; that Flinn knew Zigo and his then wife were living together, whatever he told her of being separated; that Flinn was frequently in their home in the guise of a friend; that Zigo has in the past been charged with beating his wife; that he is every way a phony, right down to his suicide attempt—surely this is a wholesome couple only in the eyes of a United States Senator, the colleague of Kennedy and Hatfield and any number of other men who long ago left their first wives behind. (As we go to press, another family-values Republican, former Maine Senator and now Defense Secretary William Cohen, is defending the appointment of four-star Air Force General Joseph Ralston to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, even though Ralston had an adulterous affair several years ago. "I am satisfied General Ralston's conduct was neither prejudicial to good order and discipline nor discrediting to the armed forces," Cohen said. What's sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander.)

Sadly, not just to senators but to a large number of regular Americans, Flinn is a martyr of the heart. Some of them believe that "love" (defined as the need to sleep with somebody) outweighs honor and duty. Others contend that because one man gets away with murder, all murderers should go unpunished—an argument that has never made a lick of sense. Surely the injustice of selective prosecution is not that some people are punished too heavily, but that others are punished too lightly. Those who are crying still that Flinn's punishment was not light enough should remember that while Airman Gayla Zigo has had the mortification of seeing her bad marriage on the national news, and Marc Zigo has been exposed from coast to coast as a cad, civilian Kelly Flinn is fielding job and book and no doubt movie offers.

Nominally independent, the Armed Services are highly political places, and great pressure was brought to bear on Air Force Secretary Sheila Widnall and General Fogleman to let Flinn off. They deserve credit for holding what ground they could, in refusing an honorary discharge. Here's hoping that there is a serviceman or two sitting tonight in a bar called Peyton Place, raising a glass to their decision.

—Katherine Dalton

DONALD I. WARREN, R.I.P. Donald Warren's untimely death in May has deprived the American and European populist right of a truly penetrating analyst. From his pioneering study of "Middle American radicals," a term he coined in 1976, to his dense biography of Father Charles Coughlin published last year, Professor Warren examined in depth the populist bridge between modern democracy and social reaction. Though by no means a partisan of what he described, he nonetheless maintained close friendships on the right—with, among others, several editors of *Chronicles*. In my case that friendship led to his sharing of valuable data on the Austrian populist Jörg Haider, on whom he reported regularly in these pages in recent years. Without that aid, which Don offered unstintingly, I could not have completed the final chapter of a book then in progress.

To some on the populist right, Don did not seem sufficiently engaged, but, like Max Weber, he drew a useful distinction between scholarship and political commitment. Though at times he gave at least inklings of rightist sentiment, he saw himself, for the most part, as a research scholar, whose bounden duty it was to be dispassionate about his subject. In pursuit of that ideal, he taught the rest of us about the prospects and pitfalls of populist movements combining majoritarian and egalitarian rhetoric with an antimodern social vision. Don did not believe that these two populist features were always in harmony or that populism could always be counted on to resist leftist elites. He was right in both assumptions, painful though it may be for some of us to admit it.

At our last meeting, about a year ago, in a noisy café abutting the University of Michigan, Don responded to my comment that Christopher Lasch had come around to his view about Middle American radicals by observing that "things have changed." He went on to explain that Middle Americans could be seduced with entitlements, even those who were not keen on quotas or liberal immigration policies. Don made this observation without visible emotion, which was typical of the way he approached his work. Though upset by his bleak premise, which he could of course document, I was forced to agree. One could not be angry at Don even when he punctured cherished illusions. An honest researcher who never avoided uncomfortable conclusions, he nonetheless showed kindness as well as candor. Anyone who dealt with him would have sensed this at once.

One suspects this fact was as obvious to his students at Oakland College, where he taught for decades, as it was in his other professional relations. As Samuel Francis, who benefited from his early work, once noted: "Only a brute could dislike Don Warren." A detailed obituary in the *New York Times* on May 22 lists his scholarly accomplishments and gives the upshot of his widely publicized work on Father Coughlin's populist career. Among the achievements not mentioned was that Don Warren could be characterized as "nice," as that term was traditionally applied, not as a putdown but as a compliment intended for a considerate person. For this even more than for his diligently pursued studies, Don deserves our prayers and fond memories.

—Paul Gottfried

FATHER'S DAY has always seemed to me a silly kind of holiday. It's a time to give Dad something he doesn't need, like another splashy necktie, or, what's

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worse, something he does need—like an electric staple gun that takes away his last excuse for not rescreening the porch. Until recently, at least, fathers did not need a special day, because they ruled the roost and ruled the world—ask any feminist.

In recent years, fathers have been taking it on the chin in the media. If you can believe what you hear on the evening news, we fathers are either "deadbeat dads" who abandon our families and refuse to pay child support, or, if we don't run off with a younger woman, we stay at home beating our wives and molesting our children. Predictably, support groups and advocacy movements have sprung up, defending "men's rights" and demanding recognition for all that fathers contribute to society.

I'm sure they all mean well, but speaking as a son and as a father, I have to say, "No thank you." I'd rather be insulted by the press and hounded by social workers than join my voice to the chorus of whiners. If fatherhood means anything, it means accepting responsibility for yourself and your family, without offering apologies or expecting gratitude.

Fathers and mothers cannot afford to care too much about what other people think. This includes their children, who quite naturally resent being told what to do, day after day. Years ago, when I was a young college professor, I had a colleague who refused to discipline his kids. His excuse, he said, was that he didn't want to do anything that would make his children dislike him in later years. "I never want to lose their love." In other words, how they felt about him was more important than how they turned out as human beings.

I am quite sure that my own children wish, from time to time, that they had a less exacting father, someone who was not always finding fault with their homework or punishing them for what they regard as minor infractions of household rules. "Some day they'll thank me," I say to myself, but for all I know they're just as likely to find a therapist who will convince them their father was a monster. I want their love and respect, but even more than that, I want them to grow up to be good men and women who will accept responsibility for themselves without blaming their problems on everyone else.

When I was a boy, I loved and respected my father, but I also feared him. "Shh," my mother would warn us in the midst of our mayhem, "your father's home." We settled down immediately. Although my mother smacked me once or twice for giving her "sass," my father never laid a hand on me. He didn't have to. He was a big man, physically intimidating. As a 70-year-old heart patient, he was insulted and threatened by a pair of biker hoodlums on the streets of Atlanta. He warned them not to come any closer, and when one of them made the mistake, he decked him with a single punch. One day, teaching me to box, his left hook just grazed my chin. It almost took my head off.

But it was not my father's physical strength that overawed me, but his moral certainty, backed up by the eloquence of his tongue—"his refined vocabulary most unpleasantly emphatic." My mother told me that she never worried about my father cheating on her, because she knew that in betraying her he would be betraying himself, which is something he refused to do.

I hope that my wife has the same confidence in me, although I will probably never be the man my father was, or the father he was, for that matter. My children do not fear me, and when I bark out commands, one of my daughters will come up and rumple my hair, saying, "Of course, daddy." These are degenerate times, but I hope that I will never degenerate so far that I will have to join a support group for fathers who get no respect.

—Thomas Fleming

EPICYCLES:

• *Mea Culpa*: Taking a cue from Bill Clinton, British Prime Minister **Tony Blair** has let the Irish know that he feels their pain. As one of his first actions, he apologized to the Irish people for the British government's role in perpetuating the Potato Famine of 1845-1850. (While the Irish were starving, the government in London refused to export food, for fear of raising prices in England.) Perhaps next he can apologize to Americans for Bill Clinton's election as President. After all, both of John F. Kennedy's grandfathers came to the United States during the famine, and Clinton claims that meeting Kennedy set him on the road to the White House.

• Barbie Keeps Rolling Along: In May, the Mattel Corporation announced a new addition to the **Barbie** family: "Share-a-Smile Becky" (could they think of a more condescending name?), the first "differently abled" Barbie doll. Becky, who shares Barbie's improbable figure but not her hair color (she's a brunette), comes complete with a pink wheelchair. While most activists for the disabled lauded Mattel for its sensitivity, some saw a darker motive: Barbie's world is currently wheelchair-inaccessible, so Mattel stands to make a bundle hawking new "handicap-friendly" houses, cars, and cruise ships. It seems political correctness can be both fun *and* profitable. Next up: Ken comes out of the closet and introduces his own line of clothes for the well-tanned cross-dresser.

• Localism: An NBC News/*Wall Street Journal* poll has found that many Americans are more interested in **local issues** than national ones, and that they increasingly view the federal government as irrelevant. The news was greeted with horror by Bill Bennett and John DiIulio. "We love a village, but a village doesn't have a Manifest Destiny," cried Bennett, apparently not realizing that this may be *why* we love a village. In the wake of the 1994 congressional elections, the former Secretary of Education and Drug Czar had briefly touted decentralism, but now "I've stopped bashing Washington," he announced. "I decided I was just fouling my own nest." No truer words . . .

OBITER DICTA: Lawrence Dugan, a poet and librarian living in Philadelphia, has contributed two new poems to this issue. Mr. Dugan's poems have appeared in the *New Republic*, the *Southern Review*, *Commonweal*, *Poetry East*, and the *Irish Edition*, among many other places. The other poet this month is **Tim Murphy**, a North Dakota resident who has a large collection of verse forthcoming from Story Line Press.

Chronicles is illustrated this month by **Igor Kopelnitsky**, a Russian artist living in Brooklyn. Since coming to the United States in 1990, Mr. Kopelnitsky has done illustrations for the *New York Times*, the *Daily News*, and the *Washington Post*, as well as *Chronicles*.

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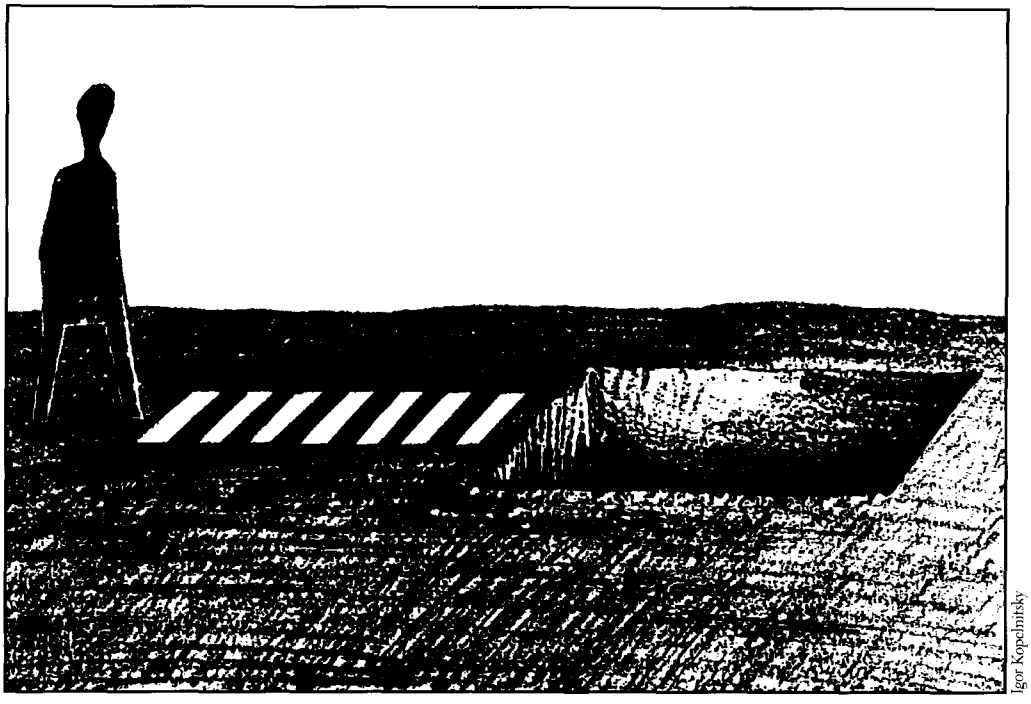

Igor Kopelnitsky

Pilgrim's Digress

by Thomas Fleming

Many generations after Christian had made his way successfully to the Celestial City, one of his descendants decided to attempt the same journey. The young man came from the Modern branch of the Christians, a recent but powerful sect that had taken over all the Christian clans. Frank, for that was the young man's name, had no wish to quarrel with his parents, whom he loved, but he was by nature argumentative, more interested in finding out the truth than in getting along with people. He had early on rejected his parents' creed of spiritual contentment through social progress and pronounced himself an atheist at the age of 12, but as he read of his ancestor's quest, he began to find fault with his father's interpretation of the Pilgrim's story as an allegory of self-actualization.

"The Celestial City," his father explained, "is only a metaphor for being in touch with ourselves and sensitive to the dignity of every human being. The creator—call him 'God,' if you must—all he wants is to have a relationship with us." But the more his father talked of social justice and the true spirit of the Gospel, the more Frank longed to follow in the Pilgrim's footsteps. He decided to leave the four bedroom mock-Tudor villa that his family had recently moved into and to set off toward the Celestial City.

Since Frank had no idea of where he could pick up the trail to the wicket gate, he went down to the local bus station to buy a ticket back to Christian's hometown, a decaying village that lay not far from an interstate highway. Things had surely not got any better in 250 years, he thought, and perhaps the best way to find the truth was to go back to a time before truth had acquired so many layers of *trompe l'oeil* wallpaper, each one darker than the last. As he entered the waiting room, he felt overwhelmed by the sight of so much human misery: winos, drug-addicted prostitutes, derelicts of every age, sex, and color. The picture of the Celestial City that had been haunting his mind for weeks began to fade, and he wondered what could be done to help these unfortunates. But, as he thought about it, what could he or any man do in the face of human suffering? This was only one bus station in a world full of bus stations, crack houses, and brothels. The planet was one vast Calcutta, an open suppurating wound that even a hundred million doctors could not heal.

Lost in his despondency, Frank did not hear what the stranger was saying to him.

"I said, 'You shouldn't let it get you down.' I know what you're thinking, that this world is a sewer of vice and corruption and that there is nothing that you or anybody can do to help. Maybe you're right about these types here. Even so, I come down twice a day to hand out pamphlets and preach the word. Some days one of them might listen, and I'll take him to the Salvation Army and fix him up, but usually they're back in 48 hours. I'm Preacher Fearwell."

Frank commented on the name, and the preacher explained that the family name was originally Farewell. "It's the same thing I figure, because the Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

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When Frank explained to Fearwell the purpose of his journey and told him of his plan to start his journey from Christian's hometown, the preacher took him by the arm and told him how dangerous it was. Did he know, for example, how many people died in highway accidents every day? Yes, he knew all about Christian's journey, but that road was still blocked by the monster Apollyon, and now there were dangerous gangs of premodern bandits who hijacked buses and kidnapped the passengers.

"Do you know what Apollyon signifies, son? He is death, the destroyer. No one can fight death. But you can run away. Life is all there is, it is all anybody has. We are promised life and that abundantly as the reward for our faith, and you must learn to revere life as our greatest gift. That is why I'm here, handing out free needles to the addicts and condoms to the hookers. Maybe I can't save their souls, but I can help them save their lives. Didn't the old Pilgrim go off crying 'Life'? Without life, you'll never make it to the Celestial City."

Only half convinced, Frank allowed Fearwell to take him to the house of a friend who could do a better job of explaining to him the importance of life. Leaving the bus station, they drove through a maze of suburban streets, past the entrances of planned developments with thematic names like: Smells and Bells Heritage Estates, Social Gospel Apartments, John Courtenay Murray Villas—retirement homes for American Catholics. "No point in taking any of those streets," explained Fearwell, "They're all cul-de-sacs."

The lady's name was Safechild, although, as she said, she was a Jellaby on her mother's side. Besides taking care of her two small children, Mistress Safechild was constantly busy with organizing protests and raids against the agents of Apollyon. Her house—which bore the sign "Temple of Life" over the entry—was a ranch-style mansion, and Frank marveled that she could keep it so clean with two children running around and so much else going on. "Grandmother Jellaby could never keep her house in order, but she hadn't discovered daycare. Besides, Mr. Safechild works overtime to make the mortgage payments and pay for the cleaning service. That means he's hardly ever around, but the children are so busy, between daycare, preschool, and extracurricular activities, I don't know when they'd find more time to spend with their father."

Fearwell explained Frank's predicament, and Mrs. Safechild offered to enlist him immediately in Pilgrims for Life. Their goal was to fight against Apollyon and all his works.

"Did you know that all over this city, Apollyon has his temples of death, where they are killing babies and convincing senior citizens to commit suicide? We block the doors, and some of our more zealous members occasionally go in and break up the equipment and kill the death-doctors—not that we condone it, of course, although it does serve them right."

"But," Frank argued, "in the Book of Life it says we are not to do evil that good may come of it. Isn't it wrong to trespass and destroy property?"

"Well, yes," she conceded, "but less wrong than to let this killing go on. After all, if your neighbor were drowning in a bathtub, you would still break in his door to save him, wouldn't you?"

"Yes, but in that case I'd know that he'd want to be saved and that, if he could, he would give us permission to break into his house."

"Well, these babies don't want to die, either. Imagine you knew that your neighbor were torturing his child. You'd naturally go over and rescue the kid."

"But in that case I'd have law on my side, in the first place, and, in the second, we're talking about my neighbor. I can't very well travel all over the world looking for parents who are abusing their children. Wouldn't it be better to preach the Word of Life? No one who hears the Word or reads the Book would ever harm his child."

"In this sinful world? The Word is all very well, but it's our job to enforce it. Our goal is someday to pass a law against killing children."

"I hate this killing as much as you do, but if you are right about how evil this world is, what makes you think the rulers who legalized infanticide can be trusted to make good laws. If people are really bent on doing evil, I don't see how we can stop them. You can't follow around every pregnant woman for 24 hours a day just to prevent her from having an abortion, and if we hire police to do the job, they'll be the same people who are now protecting the murderers and beating up your followers. Doesn't He want us to make our own way to the Celestial City? It's not as if there's a monorail. You can't just buy a ticket for someone and send him in handcuffs to salvation."

"But think of all those poor sweet babies, millions of them killed every year. The best thing we can do in this world is to save life, no matter what it costs."

"I would have thought," suggested Frank, "that the best thing you could do is to take care of your own kids instead of putting them in daycare." Momentarily flustered, Mrs. Safechild justified her neglect of her own children on the grounds of "the greater good," adding: "Sometimes we take them to the protests. We put them up in front, because that way the cops won't attack them."

"But what if they do get hurt?"

"Well, my goodness, we all have to take some risks. I once had to spend two weeks in jail, after I got carried away and hit a cop with one of my signs."

Frank was unconvinced. He could see that Safechild was a woman who wanted to do good, but her house was so far away from the road that led to the wicket gate. He began to wonder if she meant the same thing as he did by life. Frogs and mosquitoes were alive, but he could not believe that the promise of abundant life referred to nothing more than mere existence. There were, after all, circumstances when death was preferable. Jesus himself had shown the way by laying down his life. "I wonder," he said to Safechild, "if you aren't more afraid of death than you are in love with life."

Fearwell, concluding that nothing was to be gained by further discussion, offered to take him to a more able pleader, the famous Crosstitch who had woven the seamless garment of life.

As they were getting into the car, a young man hopped into the backseat and stuck a gun into Fearwell's face and told him to drive. "And you, kid," he said to Frank, "turn around and shut up and maybe you won't get hurt." The preacher told him to do as he was told: "I have heard of him. His name is Evil, and aren't we told in the Book not to resist evil?"

"You tell him, mister, because if you do resist you're going to end up dead. Of course," he added giggling, "You're going to end up dead anyway and maybe a lot sooner than you think. Enough talk, give me your money."

Fearwell, in his haste to pull his wallet out of his back pocket, almost hit a parked car. Frank sat still and did nothing.

"Come on, kid, yours too."

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Frank still didn't move and asked him why he needed both their wallets. "I can understand why you'd ask us for a handout, if you're hungry or need bus fare, but I see that you've already got several hundred dollars from Preacher Fearwell, and from the way you're dressed, you can't be too badly off."

"Oh, is that right? Well, maybe I didn't have all the advantages you've had, and I'm only adjusting the balance. Ever heard of the Maximin principle? Even that Book of yours tells you to sell all you have and give to the poor. I may be Evil, but I am also Poor and have been all my life. So give."

Fearwell begged him, almost crying, "Please, Frank, give him the money or he'll kill both of us. Nothing is worth dying for."

"If I do what he says, then I am his slave, and I will not be a slave to Evil, no matter what the threat. Go ahead and shoot." Evil reached forward with his gunhand to smash Frank in the head, and as he did, Frank twisted around in the seat, and pulling out the .38 he always carried he shot Evil in the right shoulder. The hoodlum screamed and dropped his gun, and without waiting for Fearwell to slow down the car, he opened the door and rolled out.

"I suppose you think you did something good? He's not dead, but we probably would have been killed, if you hadn't got off a lucky shot. Anyway, all you've done is make him meaner. You can never kill Evil."

"No," conceded Frank, "but we can fight him. When we are told not to resist evil, it means that we are not to fight with our neighbors or to harbor grudges. Our Lord kicked the moneychangers out of the temple, and He told his disciples that once He was gone and they were on their own, they should buy swords. By the way, it wasn't luck: I spend an hour or two every week at the pistol range. As the prophet says, 'Everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.' This hoodlum may not be dead, but neither are we. At the very least we prevented him from committing two murders, and it will be a long time before he tries another carjacking."

"But Frank, what if the boy was not really Evil, but just a poor soul gone astray. He said his other name was Poor. You might have killed him."

"Are there no rich criminals? Everyone has an excuse for taking his own road to Hell. If he had been killed, it would have been his fault, not ours. All I was trying to do was to prevent him from killing and robbing us. If I had shot him as he ran away, that would have been murder—although the way the judges in this town are, it might be the only justice that works anymore. But since he never actually said he was going to kill us—though I think he meant to—I'm content with just winging him."

By now they were driving up into the fashionable apartment complex where Crosstitch lived. Fearwell justified the opulence of the philosopher's residence by pointing out all the influential people who also had apartments in the building: newspaper editors, college presidents, TV news producers, and several ex-presidents and secretaries of state who represent international lobbying firms. "Crosstitch knows them all, intimately, and his influence is beginning to make a difference."

Entering the philosopher's vast suite of apartments, Frank noticed there was some kind of meeting or party going on. In room after room, fashionably dressed people were cutting clippings from newspapers, books, and legal documents, and patching together the parts of some kind of garment big enough to be the *peplos* that pagans made every year for their goddess. In one room, filled with Louis Quatorze and Louis Quinze furniture, the group was pulling apart the books of Voltaire and Diderot and Kant as well as several complete sets of the Encyclopedia. Every once in a while, one of the workers would paste in a paragraph—never an entire page—from the Book. Once in place, these fragments became indistinguishable from the rest.

They went from the Enlightenment Room to the Science Room, where the same work was going on, and they walked through a bleak and windowless hall without a sign of life: not even a cactus grew. It was filled with nothing but compasses and protractors, and various kinds of primitive computing equipment. The only book he recognized was in German. "What a dreadful place," exclaimed Frank. "Yes," replied Fearwell. It is the Natural Law library. Nothing will grow here, because of the poor light, but it's not a problem, since hardly anybody ever comes."

Turning the corner, they found themselves in the Democratic Capitalism alcove—it was small, but all the furniture, although very modern, was gilt—where a small group was busily clipping coupons and cutting up an English translation of the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Their colleagues then pasted the pages, layer upon layer, over the yellowing pages of letters written in Latin. Frank just caught the words *Rerum novarum* before they were pasted over with a page of the *Wall Street Journal*. There were two pictures hanging on the wall, but one of them was turned backwards. Frank lifted it up and saw the name Leo XIII. The other picture was upside down, and he did not have to look twice to recognize the sorrowful but forgiving face of Leo's current successor.

As they made their way into the main salon, Crosstitch walked across the crowded room to greet them. "Just a small gathering a few of my friends arranged for me," he explained, waving his arm vaguely as if to display the grand prize on a game show. "I hope, young man, that I will soon be able to call you a friend." Fearwell asked him who all the people were, and Crosstitch replied: "Trial lawyers, mostly. You see, they think that my small work has been making headway against the barbarity of the death penalty, and naturally they—or rather their clients—are grateful. This evening, as it happens, we'll be having a prayer vigil for one of them, a young man who is going to be executed in Texas. What savages we are to each other—man is still wolf to man."

Frank asked what the unfortunate fellow had done to end up on death row, and Crosstitch mused for a moment: "I don't just remember, although I'm sure it was dreadful. I think it involved a series of rather ghastly rapes, coupled with murder and dismemberment. But, then, he was abused by his father."

"Will you be praying for his victims, too?" Frank inquired.

"Well, yes, I suppose so. But right now, it is this poor man who is being murdered by the state."

"Isn't that a rather loose way of talking? After all, murder is a certain type of unlawful homicide, whereas execution—even if we think it is wrong—has almost been always regarded as a legitimate exercise of the state's God-given power to repress wickedness and protect the innocent."

"What difference does it make, ultimately, whether a murder is committed by a hoodlum in the park or by a judge passing sentence in his court? In one respect, the judge is the worse offender, because he is not operating under the kinds of psychological compulsion that drives so many murderers to do

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what they do."

"So, you would defend the Marquis de Sade, who, when the Jacobins made him a judge, refused to condemn any aristocrats to death, insisting that he would kill for pleasure, yes, but never for justice."

"I can see," observed Crosstitch in a voice that was rapidly cooling off, "that your education should have been more carefully supervised. What is a Christian doing, reading Sade? But let it pass. Let us even, for the sake of argument, concede that the judge is no worse. But how is he any better than, say, the abortionist who is also acting within the law?"

"There is a difference, isn't there, between carrying out the law and doing something which is not forbidden? For example, it is not against the law for a host to insult a guest or, in most states, for a man to have unnatural relations with another man, but you would not say that the rude host or the homosexual were acting in the same way as the man who pays his taxes or the policeman who arrests the child-molester. In the former cases, the actions are permitted by the law, but in the latter case they are commanded."

"Let us leave off these fruitless quibbles. Any intentional homicide detracts from the dignity of life, and it makes no difference if the killing is done as a legal abortion or an execution. Once a society accepts execution as something normal, it will quickly proceed to abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia."

"Isn't it strange then," asked Frank, "that Christians have been executing criminals for nearly 2,000 years, while at the same time viewing abortion and infanticide with horror? I think the reverse of what you say is true, that as we refused to distinguish between right and wrong by declaring some crimes worthy of death, we lost our reverence for innocent life. Even our manners became corrupted. It is something like De Quincey's famous argument about murder. 'If once a man indulges himself in murder, very soon he comes to think little of robbing; and from robbing he comes next to drinking and Sabbath-breaking, and from that to incivility and procrastination.'"

"I'm afraid I'm not following you at all."

"Look, a man might murder or steal with good reason, or at least with what he thinks is a good reason, and the act does not stain his soul very deeply, but if these crimes deaden him to the humanity of other people, he will lapse into a habitual incivility that will send him to Hell sooner than a dozen killings. In the same way, our refusal to punish serious crimes like murder and rape by executing the criminal seems to blunt our character. If a serial killer may not be executed, then how valuable were the innocent lives he took? How valuable is any life, any piece of property, and sense of personal worth? From the failure to kill the killer we pass soon into refusing to punish the abortionist and an insistence upon tolerating every vice and indecency."

"I'd like to go on chatting with you—I realize that you are a serious-minded young man, but I can see that my friends are anxious to get on with the 'roast' they have planned."

The roast turned out to be a mock-trial in which Crosstitch was to be the defendant, and his friends in the legal profession would play judge, jury, attorneys. The only hitch in the proceedings was that no one was willing to undertake the prosecution. "We owe him a lot," explained one lawyer who had risen to stardom by defending a celebrity who had murdered his wife in cold blood. "Crosstitch hasn't just raised the American consciousness on the death penalty; he's also made it clear that the system is racist—why else are over half the convicted murderers black? Let me tell you it's going to be a cold day in Hell before any L.A. jury is allowed to vote for the death penalty, if the defendant even has a healthy tan."

Since no one else was willing to take on the task, Frank—who had a bit of the lawyer in his makeup—agreed to play prosecutor. After the usual shenanigans, the trial got under way with Frank reading out the charges. He accused Crosstitch of misrepresenting the Book, of perverting the doctrines of his own ancient church, and of a moral cowardice and hypocrisy that destroyed all reverence for life.

But the outcome of the trial and Frank's subsequent adventures when he falls into the hands of the premodern bandit leaders, Peter, Martin, and Thomas—all that must be reserved for the sequel. ©

Poe at Fordham

by Lawrence Dugan

Ten miles away, the Atlantic coast
Is taking a beating from this storm;
Everything outside the house is wet,
Inside looks dry, dark and warm.

From a little basement window
Comes the glow of television;
The fire is on; a football fan
Waits for a huddle's decision.

I call on a nearby telephone,
A young man answers the door.
An older lady takes his place
Just as the rain starts to pour.

Edgar Poe's house in Fordham
Where young Virginia died:
The house holds in the dark warmth
Against the cold outside.

I take the tour, watch the film—
Brahms behind an actor's voice—
One sad April to another,
Year to year without a choice.

Move or die the plot says,
He moves until she slips away,
Wrapped in his old Army cloak
On a cold, rainy Fordham day.

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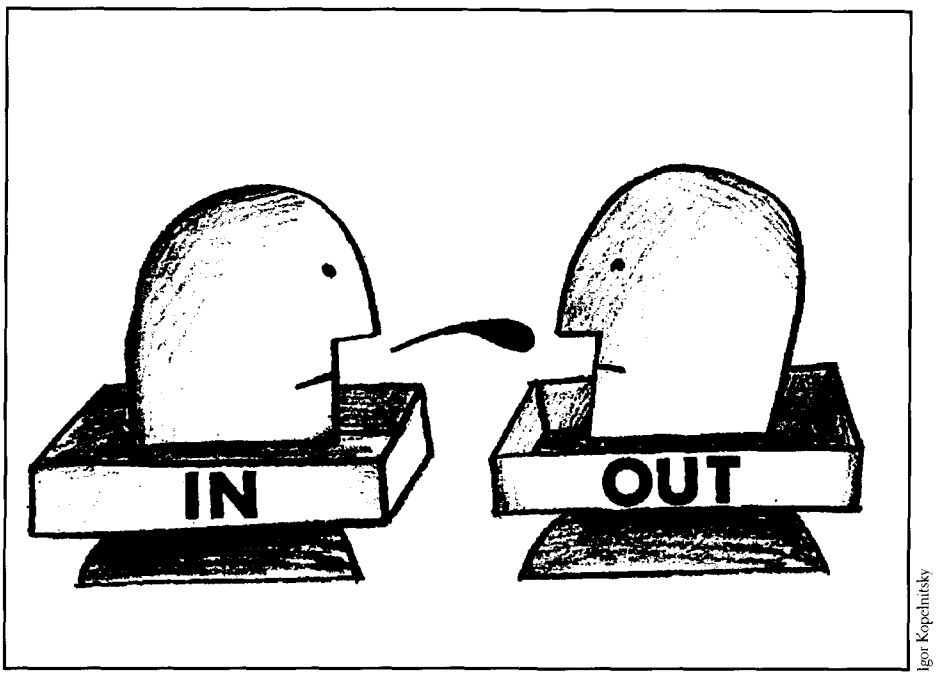
Don't Feed the War Machine

by Bill Kauffman



Igor Kopelnitsky

"His sympathies were for race—too lofty to descend to persons," a wit once said of the abolitionist Senator Sumner. For how else could a man countenance the slaughter of his countrymen, not only rebel Southerners but noble Robert Gould Shaw and Berkshires boys, too?

The most dangerous people—the ones who will kill you for your own good—are those who subordinate the individual to abstractions: the class, the master race, the efficient economy. They gain power because they are willing to perform the sleazy and degrading acts necessary to its achievement. You see them on television, their flickering lair: the Senator once arrested outside the South African embassy, oozing righteousness, who daily browbeat his staff with his crazed Richie Rich rantings; the slovenly obese comedienne, self-styled champion of the working class, who mistreats elevator operators and hotel clerks; the striding purposeful men—from Bill Clinton to William Simon—who make a great show of their religious faith yet are known as squalling martinets who abuse underlings.

Influential men, their days a blur of movement, retainers at beck and call, unable even to dial a car phone by themselves, come to see others as toadies or supplicants (with the toothsome few laid aside as bed partners). In their eyes we are all expendable. Why was anyone surprised when Ted Kennedy swam away, leaving Mary Jo Kopechne to scream in her air pocket till the water rushed in? Kopechnes serve, and Kennedys are served; Vietnam was just Chappaquiddick with rice paddies. Shut up and die.

Who are these creatures, capable of decreeing—with no more compunction than an acned scamp in a Metallica T-shirt displays whilst zapping foes in Mortal Kombat—the mass execution of, say, Iraqi children or uppity Salvadoran peasants? Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, wrote of Hiroshima and Nagasaki:

> Mr. Truman was jubilant . . . True man. What a strange name, come to think of it. . . . Truman is a true man of his time in that he was jubilant. He was not a son of God, brother of Christ, brother of the Japanese, jubilating as he did . . . *jubilate deo*. We have killed 318,000 Japanese . . . they are vaporized, our Japanese brothers, scattered, men, women and babies, to the four winds, over the seven seas. Perhaps we will breathe their dust into our nostrils, feel them in the fog of New York on our faces, feel them in the rain on the hills of Easton.

But then Dorothy was what they called a sob sister. Of course she wasn't: her acts of charity, her very life, were face to face, local, and intensely "personalist," as she sometimes described her philosophy. (Other times it was "anarchist" or "distributist.") But she saw Christ in the face of a Bowery bum, and like an impractical idealist she offered him bread instead of a

Bill Kauffman is the author of Every Man A King, Country Towns of New York, *and* America First!

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knee to the groin and an application for Food Stamps.

Harry, meanwhile, gave them Hell, all right. Unless Hell gave them Harry. (There are two names for men who order flunkies to kill strangers: Charles Manson and Mr. President.)

The *New York Tribune* observed of General Ulysses S. Grant's "immobile, heavy, and expressionless" visage that it was "the face of the only man in America, perhaps, who could make the calculation of the multitude of lives necessary to blot out a multitude of other lives." This calculus requires a certain moral density; an inability to credit persons unknown to you with lives, families, feelings, and histories of their own. Politicians, who perforce see people merely as an agglomeration of lever-pullers called the "electorate," are capable of making this dead reckoning; curiously, many military men cannot, perhaps because the men they drill are all too real to them. Among the most memorable of American antiwar voices was that of General Smedley Butler, the maverick marine, who told a radio audience in 1939:

> Now—*you mothers*, particularly! The only way you can resist all this war hysteria and beating of tom-toms is by asserting the love you bear your boys. When you listen to some well-worded, some well-delivered *war* speech, just remember it's nothing but *sound*. No amount of sound can make up to you for the loss of your boy. . . . Look at him. Put your hand on that spot on the back of his neck. The place you used to love to kiss when he was a baby. Just rub it a little. You won't wake him up, he knows it's you. . . . Look at this splendid young creature who's part of yourself, then close your eyes for a moment and I'll tell you what can happen.
>
> Somewhere—5,000 miles from home. Night. Darkness. Cold. A drizzling rain. The noise is terrific. All Hell has broken loose. A star shell bursts in the air. Its unearthly flare lights up the muddy field. There's a lot of tangled rusty barbed wires out there and a boy hanging over them—his stomach ripped out, and he's feebly calling for help and water. His lips are white and drawn. He's in agony. There's your boy.

Today, Butler's speech would be derogated as mawkish—that is, if the two or three corporations that have gobbled up all our radio stations would permit its broadcast. (Sure they would. It could air right after the "Noam Chomsky Hour.") You see, mother is not supposed to care if her son dies on a foreign battlefield, fighting because a few degenerate old men have ordered him thither; he's only one boy, after all—there are plenty more where he came from. The thoroughly modern mother must cut the apron strings—or power-suit tails—when Troy or Trey or Treg is but an infant. After all, we've got to prepare him to *compete in the global economy*. No sooner has he been graduated from daycare than off he goes to Stanford, where if he's a sentimental slob he can e-mail mom a loving message on Mother's Day. If he's of the working class, he can learn the skills that will enable him to *compete in the global economy* by joining the world's largest and richest and deadliest socialist organization, the U.S. Armed Forces.

The best reason to oppose the military-industrial complex is the most intimate: because it can kill your son or brother or cousin, and its social and economic fallout can destroy your town. But arguments from personal experience are consistently belittled. For instance, the only legitimate defense against a charge of prejudice is the oft-lampooned "some of my best friends are . . ." Yet this is inadmissible; the prescribed defense is to make a windy speech about brotherhood, get misty-eyed when Tiger Woods wins the Masters, and then go home and underpay your Guatemalan housekeeper.

During the Cold War our Presidents became masters of spangled orotundity, of ghosted magniloquence, as the rotting carcasses piled up offstage. How could we possibly have endured three consecutive rulers such as JFK, LBJ, and RMN—deranged monograms who, their publicists assured us, dreamed Great Dreams. (The only compliment more glowing is that a President "made America believe in itself again," as Ronald of Bel Air was said to have done. Indeed, who among us will ever forget where he was at the moment he learned that Grenada had been liberated?)

Yes, these men thought big. Kennedy, after declaring that he and his Harvard touch-football-playing suckups were willing to make Middle American boys pay any price and bear any burden to perform the constitutionally mandated task of preserving the libertarian democracies of Quemoy and Matsu, next set his sights on colonizing the moon, which had never done us any harm. (Presumably our Pulitzer Prize-winning historian had heard colorable tales of sluttish seleno-starlets just dying for one of those fabled 45-second Kennedy love marathons.) The pathological liar Johnson declared war on poverty, which he apparently intended to win by killing as many poor boys as possible in Vietnam. Then came Nixon, geostrategic thinker for the ages. In one of those sententious post-Watergate books that were intended to burnish his reputation and make us forget about his fascistic misuse of the FBI and IRS (or is any use of the internal security system by definition a misuse?), Nixon quoted De Gaulle that "France was never true to herself unless she was engaged in a great enterprise." To which the Trickster added: "I have always believed that this was true of the United States as well. Defending and promoting peace and freedom around the world is a great enterprise. Only by rededicating ourselves to that goal will we remain true to ourselves."

True to ourselves. You might think you can be true to yourself by raising a family, participating in the life of a small and vital community, writing books about your people's history, building houses or farming land or simply studying with the birds, flowers, trees, God, and yourself, as Dvořák had it—but you would be wrong. Worse, you would be small, meager, mean, niggardly, pinched. The measure of a man's greatness is his willingness to abandon his family and go abroad to murder strangers on behalf of . . . your guess is as good as mine. "What are you fighting for?" screamed a pretty blonde from a Catholic girl's school. "It's not my security." Even if we discount the possibility that our men have died and killed for corporate interests, financiers, the munitions industry, or the foreigners who embroiled us in the republic-razing Cold War, we are still left with Mr. Nixon's "great enterprises."

The kids' lemonade stand on the street corner is a great enterprise; the cabinetmaker's shop is a great enterprise; the town historical society's new museum is a great enterprise; the undertakings of the warped and scrofulous men who rule us call to mind Thoreau's remarks on the pyramids: "There is nothing to wonder at in them so much as the fact that so many men could be found degraded enough to spend their lives constructing a tomb for some ambitious booby, whom it would have been wiser and manlier to have drowned in the Nile."

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I'll say this for them, though: JFK, LBJ, and RMN were born in these United States of America and at some point in their lives, each of them met actual Americans. Reagan and Clinton, too. (Bush may have seen a few Connecticut laborers through the tinted glass of his limousine's window, but that doesn't count.) The brain trusts that advise our Presidents whom to bomb and where to ship our myrmidons became, over the postrepublic years, less and less American, infiltrated by émigrés both unintelligible (Brzezinski, Kissinger) and polished (Albright, Shalikashvili). Indeed, authentic Americans within the Clinton foreign policy apparat are as rare as white kids on a PBS children's show. These newcomers, by and large Russophobic (for good—but *non-American*—reasons), brought with them exotic habits: Edward Teller pestered us to adopt the metric system lest we be "overtaken by Russia"; of Nobel Laureate Kissinger, Pat Moynihan liked to say, "Henry does not lie because it is in his interest; he lies because it is in his nature."

These aliens have no real connection to Americans: the war-death of a boy from Youngstown means no more to them than the war-death of a boy from Prague. They see it as an even (if not lopsided) trade. Like General Grant, they can do crimson calculus; it's easier for them, lacking, as they do, ties of kinship or neighborliness within our country. (Roscoe Conkling poetized Grant's rootlessness—sorry, Galena—at the 1880 Republican convention: "When asked what state he hails from / Our sole reply shall be— / 'He hails from Appomattox / With its famous apple tree.'")

Do you really think Henry Kissinger gave a damn how many Joe Doakses and LeRoy Washingtons he inscribed on the Vietnam Wall? He didn't know these men; he couldn't *imagine* them. They hadn't even the reality of a planchet on a Risk board. The same with Madeleine Albright: indeed, Prague means more to her than Youngstown ever could. If your son's corpse and those of his ten best friends can pry open a foreign market or break a turbaned renegade to the U.N./U.S. will, then unzip the body bags and grab that shovel, sexton.

I will give you my solution, though it is no more "practical" than a Dorothy Day prayer or a Henry Thoreau spade. No statesman's coercive power should ever extend over people he does not know. If Madeleine and the Democracy Geeks of M Street want to pull their Brads and Joshuas out of Choate and ship them overseas to kill ragheads and bohunks and niggers and chinks—the inscrutables are our new enemy; the yellow peril rides again!—to make the world safe for Nike, then so be it, but she has no claim upon my kin or my neighbors (or yours).

We are useful to them only insofar as we follow orders, do not make trouble, and die on cue. The literary critic Paul Fussell, whose back and right thigh were ripped by shrapnel from a German shell in March 1945, explained, "It wasn't long before I could articulate for myself the message that war was sending the infantry soldier: 'You are expendable. Don't imagine that your family's good opinion of you will cut any ice here. You are just another body to be used. Since *all* can't be damaged or destroyed as they are fed into the machinery, some may survive, but that's not my fault. Most must be chewed up, and you'll probably be one of them. This is regrettable, but nothing can be done about it.'"

Well, one thing can be done about it. Don't go. Stay with your family. Confirm their good opinion of you. Don't feed the war machine. You are not expendable, in your family's eyes or in God's. The 30-piece whores of Washington who write their little pamphlets proving that whatever slaughter our government is currently engaged in is a "just war" should be laughed back to the seminaries they quit. Thou shalt not kill means us, too.

The Pallbearers

by Tim Murphy

At the prairie cemetery
where the river meets a road
and Murphys come to bury
love in the loam we've sowed
my brother lets me carry
the light end of the load.

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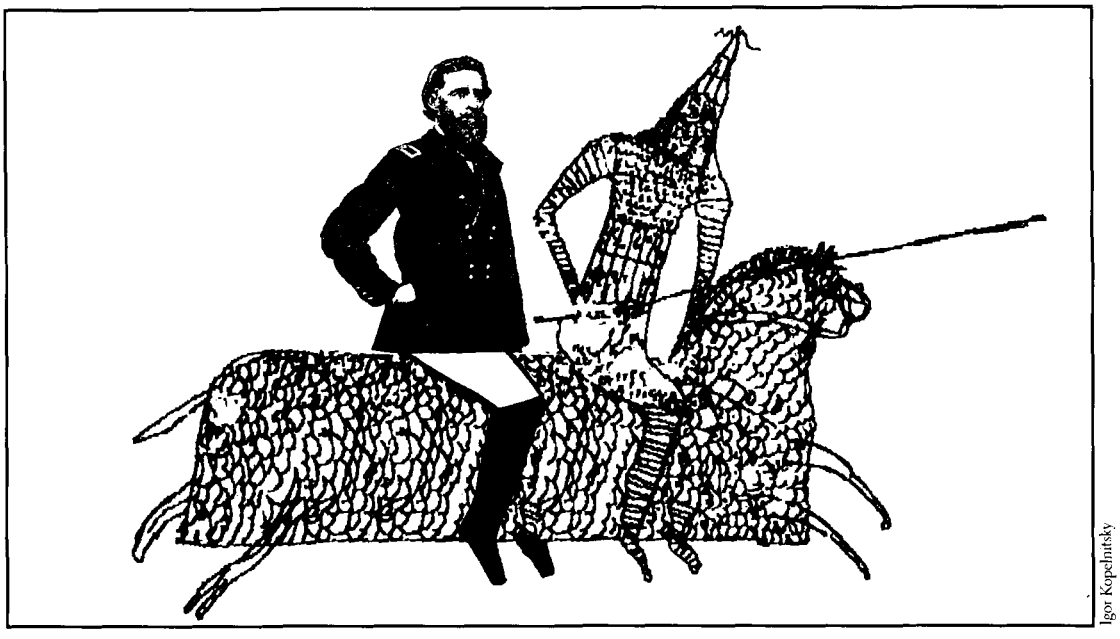
Honor, Violence, and Civilization

by Michael Hill



Igor Kopelnitsky

For evidence that academics miss the obvious, look no further than the 1996 study by two Midwestern psychologists on the proclivity of white Southern males to resort to violence when their honor is challenged. What a surprise!

Psychologists Richard Nisbett (University of Michigan) and Dov Cohen (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) conducted a series of what would seem to be experiments. Upon learning firsthand that insulting a non-Hispanic white man from the South can be dangerous, the professors concluded that white Southern boys, when insulted or threatened, experience a testosterone surge normally absent in their gentler Northern brethren. The unleashing of this politically incorrect hormone accounts for the South's much-maligned "culture of honor."

Most of us regard the results of this study as welcome confirmation of what we like to believe. Years ago, in my dissipated youth, when I dabbled at being a Southern rocker in the days of the original Allman Brothers Band, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and the Marshall Tucker Band, a female groupie (I suppose there are other varieties on today's music scene) said she liked Southerners best because they were still "real men." What she meant was that, unlike the long-haired peaceniks from Boston, New York, and San Francisco, Southern musicians and other assorted rowdies had not offered up their virility on the altar of feminism. As reflected in many of their songs—both rock and country—raucous and hard-drinkin' Southern boys tickled the distaff fancy by frequently engaging in knock-down, drag-out barroom brawls over the slightest affront to Momma, Old Spot, Sweet Thang, or some other loved one. To the average, red-blooded woman-child, such a manifestation of high-testosterone bravado more often than not proved sexually alluring, all but assuring the cultural/biological continuation of this trait.

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Never one to defend (or understand) the ways of the South, Rush Limbaugh intoned shortly after the publication of this study that Southern men should take Nisbett's and Cohen's study as an insult to their civility. Of course Mr. Limbaugh had a solution ready at hand: vote for Bob Dole and y'all won't have to endure such abuse any longer. Moments later a caller who identified himself as a resident of the "first capital of the Confederacy" informed Limbaugh that the revelations about white Southern males were not news in his neck of the woods, and that it was a good thing that at least one group of American men still had their anatomy intact after several decades of government-imposed feminization. Limbaugh agreed, but both host and caller excluded Bill Clinton from this category, of course. I suppose we will have to await final confirmation from Paula Jones.

What indeed should we Southrons make of this study? There are, after all, some not-so-obvious implications at work here. Twenty years ago, my mentors at the University of Alabama, historians Forrest McDonald and Grady McWhiney, began looking seriously into the Celtic (Scottish, Irish, and Welsh) influence on Southern culture. As Southerners themselves, McDonald and McWhiney knew that most crackers claimed to be at least partly Celtic, and that the Celts were products of a martial society in which men of action were held in high regard. In one sense, these historians did not tell Southerners of Celtic descent anything they did not already know: that they were prone to commit violent acts over questions of honor and repute. What they did was provide a proper historical understanding of *why* this cultural trait is so prevalent in Dixie. Professors McDonald and McWhiney advanced their "Celtic thesis" with understandable regional pride. It gave Southern crackers and rednecks (the only group that can still be insulted with impunity in polite company) a wider historical identity and made them proud to be descended from a fierce and independent people. In doing so, it suggested to them that

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their "culture of honor" was nothing to be ashamed of.

I seriously doubt that Nisbett and Cohen intended their study to contribute to the self-esteem of Southern Celts. But perhaps there is more here than Yankee cracker-bashing. Noting that a white Alabama boy is more likely to shoot someone over an *affaire d'honneur* than is someone from Massachusetts (I'm reminded here of candidate Michael Dukakis's response to a hypothetical question about what he might do to avenge his wife's rape), they seem to suggest that it is somehow unwise to permit Southerners to exercise their rights under the Second Amendment. Now, it is all right with me if the gentlefolk from New England and elsewhere above the Mason-Dixon line wish to perceive us as gun-totin' cowboys. Perhaps this will stem the influx of snowbirds (distinguishable by sandals over black socks), yuppies, and Yankee professors.

The really bad part of this study is the feminist propaganda against the evils of testosterone. Convince enough females that they are really "equal" with males in all respects, and convince enough males that their traditional role as protector is biologically aberrant, and you have created social chaos and revolution. In the New World Order of Perfect Gender Equity lies the justification for extermination of this biological anomaly. If no testosterone, then no males, no violence, no spouse and child abuse, no rape, no war—the complete triumph of the feminist vision.

As the last of a dying breed of men, Southerners should wear the "culture of honor" mantle proudly. Men who allow their families, friends, and society to be dishonored without so much as a harsh word in response do not deserve to be called men, much less *civilized* men. While Yankees and Englishmen might rightly ignore insults against Abe Lincoln and the Queen, respectively, Southerners and their Celtic cousins should not be expected to react so passively to unkind words about Jefferson Davis or Robert the Bruce.

The South has historically been home to gentlemen who took affronts to their honor seriously and who understood that the manly arts of self-defense were necessary components of civilization. Since the South was the most extensive frontier in antebellum America, the use of weapons was of peculiar importance there. If a young man wished to survive his teen years, he had to devote a considerable amount of practice to the use of fists, blade, and gun.

Three Southerners come to mind as archetypes of this frontier culture—John Smith (whom Thomas Fleming has called "the first American"), Andrew Jackson, and James (Jim) Bowie. Smith (c. 1580-1631) made his mark as a soldier and adventurer, leaving his home in Willoughby, England, at age 15 to seek his fortune. He spent a good deal of time living alone in the wilderness in primitive conditions to strengthen his body, intellect, and self-reliance, all the time longing for the sea and dreaming of "doings with the sword." In 1599, aged 19, he volunteered for service in the Dutch wars, and his mettle as a man was tested straightaway. On the voyage to the continent, Smith had his possessions stolen by a party of four cunning French rogues, who made away with them while the ship was in port. Smith determined to hunt them down and actually had the good fortune of meeting up with the leader of the pack of thieves in Brittany. He drew his sword and without a word engaged his adversary in single combat. Severely wounded, the thief confessed, though Smith's possessions were long gone by that time. However, the young Englishman had shown himself a man of courage and honor.

After serving as a mercenary in the Netherlands, Smith took up arms in the service of the Hapsburgs in their struggle against the Turks in the Balkans in 1601, and it was in this Christian-Muslim conflict that he established his credentials as a soldier. Just 21 years old, Smith arrived in this bloody marshland at a time when the fortunes of war were running against the forces of Christendom. But he made his presence known immediately, devising an ingenious plan for the capture of the Turkish-held fortress of Alba Regalis in Hungary. By bombarding the stronghold with "fiery dragons"—earthen vessels filled with powder and shot and covered with pitch—such an alarm was caused among the defenders that they sallied forth from their cover to be massacred by a Christian counterattack, which carried the city walls. Barring Smith's daring plan, the fortress would not have been taken except by a long and laborious siege. As the Christians celebrated their victory, Smith noted: "The lamentable noise of the miserable slaughtered Turks was most wonderful to hear."

But it was at the siege of Regall, another Turkish-occupied redoubt in Hungary, that Smith exhibited the marks of a true warrior. The Turks were confident that they could hold out indefinitely and, consequently, became haughty and overconfident. The leader of the garrison, Lord Turbishaw, challenged the Christian camp to put forth its best fighter to engage with him in single combat; it was John Smith who won the honor. In his *Life of Captain John Smith*, William Gilmore Simms gives the following account of Smith's victory:

> So admirably true was the aim, so firm the nerves of the Christian champion, and so well-trained his steed, that the lance of Smith penetrated the beaver of the Turk, and passing through his eye into the brain, he fell dead to the ground at the first thrust, without so much as grazing the person of his conqueror. Smith leapt to the ground, unbraced the helmet of his enemy, and finding him lifeless, smote off his head, which he bore away in triumph to the Christian host.

Before his exploits at Regall were finished, Smith had met and defeated two more Turks in single combat: Turbishaw's personal friend, Grualgo, and Bonny Mulgro. As with the first victim, Smith also took the heads of his last two foes as trophies of war. As a reward for his exploits, Smith was presented a patent of nobility by the Prince of Transylvania and thus was entitled to a coat of arms which bore three Turks' heads in a shield with the motto *Vincere est Vivere* ("To conquer is to live").

The John Smith who appears in American history books (and in the stupid Disney film *Pocahontas*) is rarely presented in light of his accomplishments and travails (primarily as a slave of the Turks) before he set foot in the Virginia colony. His military career indeed had prepared him well for the vagaries of the American wilderness, and where lesser men failed, Smith's toughness and determination helped assure that the English settlement in Virginia would succeed. When he arrived in North America, he had already seen and done more than any of his companions.

Smith virtually single-handedly saved the Virginia colony from extinction by instituting an iron discipline among the laggard settlers (many of whom had wasted precious energy and resources in a vain search for a Northern version of El Dorado)

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and by instilling fear into the hostile Indian tribes in the vicinity of Jamestown. He browbeat and threatened Powhatan until the chief and his subordinates begged for peace with the colonists. One example will suffice to show that Smith had not forgotten the lesson learned against Turbishaw and his comrades at the Transylvanian redoubt of Regall. When Powhatan's half-brother Opechancanough surrounded Smith's small party of Englishmen, the fiery captain challenged him to single combat. The chief, aware of Smith's prowess, declined. Undeterred, Smith seized him by the hair, shoved a pistol to his chest, and paraded him among his astonished followers with a warning to them all: "If you shoot but one arrow to shed but one drop of blood of any of my men . . . I will not cease revenge (if once I begin) so long as I can hear where to find one of your nation." So bewildered were the natives that they attributed Smith's bravado to the supernatural. Could a mere mortal be so terrible a foe?

Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), born of Scotch-Irish parents in the South Carolina backcountry, was a product of his frontier heritage. He fought and was captured in the American War for Independence and thereafter settled in Tennessee to become a backwoods lawyer. But Jackson was more interested in horse-racing, cock-fighting, gambling, and dueling than in studying law, and among his 100 or so "fights or violent and abusive quarrels" was a famous duel with Charles Dickinson, who had angered "Old Hickory" by making untoward remarks about his wife Rachel. The two men met at only eight paces, and Dickinson's first shot hit Jackson's right shoulder. He tried to return fire, but his dueling pistol misfired. Calmly, the bleeding Jackson reloaded, fired, and hit his adversary squarely between the eyes. As historian Grady McWhiney writes, "Jackson recovered to become judge, general, and President—and to fight more duels."

Though Jackson is famous for his many duels, he is better known as the tenacious general who led what amounted to a Southern militia on rigorous campaigns against the British at New Orleans, the Creek Indians in Alabama, and the Spanish in Florida. His buckskinned backwoodsmen were expert with their famous "squirrel guns," which destroyed the ranks of Major General Edward Pakenham's redcoats from behind the mud ramparts on Rodriguez Canal, east of New Orleans, in December 1814. The victory at New Orleans immortalized "Old Hickory" as one of America's most successful practitioners of irregular warfare. His "Dirty Shirts," as the British derisively called them because of their dingy homespun attire, were among the most able fighters of their day, and prefigured the gray-and-butternut-clad Confederate soldiers of the 1860's in both guts and *esprit de corps*.

James Bowie (c. 1796-1836), the son of South Carolinian Rezin Bowie (who fought in the War for American Independence under the fabled "Swamp Fox," Brigadier General Francis Marion), was already a legend on the Southern frontier even before he was immortalized at the Alamo. A fiery, muscular, and intelligent man, Jim Bowie spent most of his days going from one adventure to the next, and amassed a fortune from land speculating and slave trading (where he met the famous pirate, Jean Laffite). It is unlikely that Bowie "invented" the magnificent knife that bears his name; however, he indeed was its most skillful user, making his mark through the numerous duels he fought.

Bowie killed between 15 and 20 men in "nonmilitary" combat, most of them falling to his deadly trademark, the "Arkansas toothpick." But Bowie was no cold-blooded killer; rather, he used his courage and skill with the blade often to right wrongs committed against innocent men and women by the various miscreants who inhabited the Mississippi and Louisiana frontier. His three most famous duels—the fight with Major Norris Wright in 1826, the noted "Sandbar Duel" in 1827, and the fracas with "Bloody" John Sturdivant in 1829—reveal that Bowie did not go looking for trouble, but that it often seemed to find him. The first two affairs were little more than brawls involving several men on each side, but the run-in with Sturdivant was a face-off in which the two opponents' left wrists were tied together across a gaming table. The Sturdivant duel took place in a dive in the infamous Natchez-under-the-hill district and was the direct result of Bowie's having exposed a crooked faro game run by his antagonist. Bowie quickly disabled Sturdivant's right arm, but mercifully spared his life. Several months later, "Bloody" John hired three assassins to dispatch Bowie, but Jim killed all three.

> The South has historically been home to gentlemen who took affronts to their honor seriously and who understood that the manly arts of self-defense were necessary components of civilization.

Perhaps the most provocative story surrounding Bowie's career as a knife-fighter is one in which he and an adversary entered an abandoned cabin after dark and grappled for a blade that had been stuck in the floorboards. This was a simple contest—the man who walked out was the winner. Though Bowie's gory fighting techniques would have been scorned by more formal practitioners of the Code Duello, we ought to remember that the Southern frontier in the 1820's and 1830's was a rough-and-tumble backwater in which a man's reputation for toughness served as his first line of defense. No doubt, Jim Bowie would have killed more men than he did had not his fearsome reputation caused the more circumspect of his acquaintances to avoid crossing him in the first place.

Indeed, a reputation for toughness was, and is still, the best keeper of the peace, and this is why the South (or at least the small towns and rural areas) remains an oasis of civilization. We can only hope that coming generations of white Southern men will carry on this tradition of honorable self-defense. Otherwise, whence shall come our Rolands, our Don Juans, our Bedford Forrests, our Smiths, Jacksons, and Bowies? Should this life-sustaining pugnacity disappear, so too will the South. And with the South will go the last remnant of a vigorous, self-confident, and manly Western civilization. c

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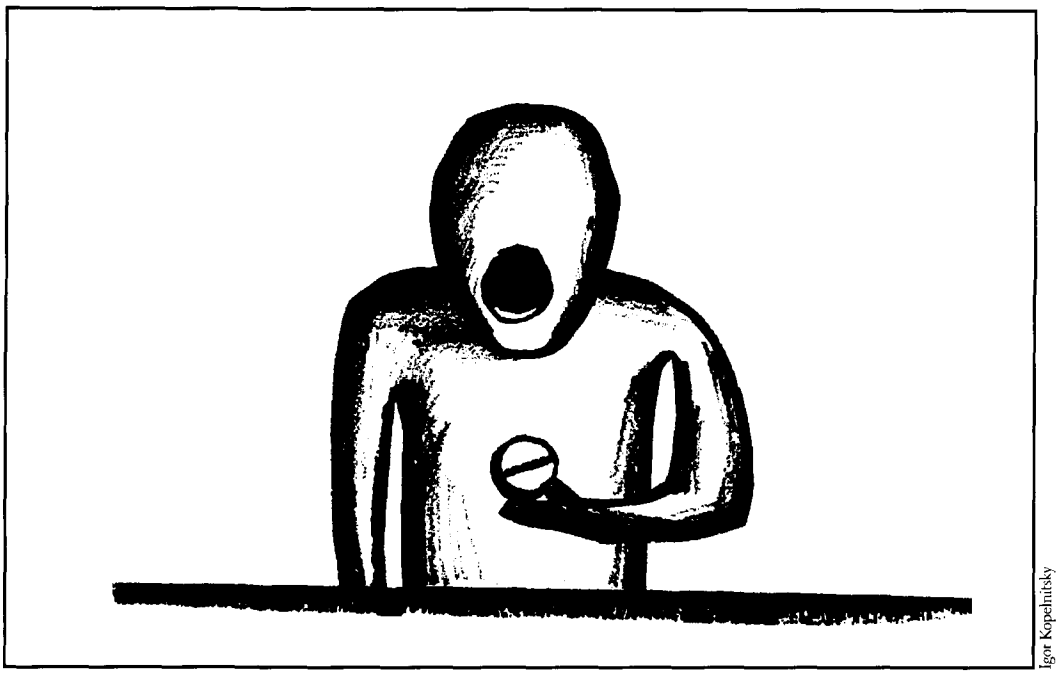
Euthanasia for Excellence

by Allan Carlson



Igor Kopelnitsky

On April 10 of last year, the European Patent Office quietly awarded a patent to Michigan State University (MSU) for "euthanasia solutions which use the anesthetic gamma-hydroxy-butramide (embutramide) as a basis for formulating the composition." On the surface, the event was not out of the ordinary. In the abstract of the public document, the new compound appeared to be for application among the "lower mammals," meaning for veterinary needs. In this regard, the new drug was an improvement. Unlike the existing product, known as T-61, the MSU compound did not contain a barbiturate, making it easier to store and transport. It also avoided common side effects, such as "a stiffening of the forelimbs" and an overstimulation of the brain.

So the matter might have lain, had not a German patent attorney affiliated with the conservative group *Mut Zur Ethik* ("Courage to Take a Moral Stance") come across the provisional award of patent during a routine review of public documents. He secured background materials, including a March 1, 1994, response from the Examining Division of the European Patent Office. In raising challenges to MSU's initial application, it included this passage: "The Examining Division notices that the subject matter of the claims is not limited to the provision of euthanasia in lower mammals. The attention of the Applicant is drawn to the fact that humans are a mammalian species, and that as a result of the wording of the claims the Applicant is seeking protection for an agent for committing euthanasia on humans as well." And noted: "Active euthanasia is a felony under the law of many countries, and the provision of an agent for providing euthanasia in humans probably will have a similar position under those laws." The European examiners asked the American university to give "an explicit statement" on this, "or to limit the claims of the present application."

Given this opportunity, MSU responded, through a European law firm, on July 1, 1994: "The compositions of the present invention are intended for use in lower animals. There is no intent to violate the laws of any country in reference to use in humans. *Nevertheless, if it should ever become legal to use the compositions in human beings, the patent claims should encompass the use of the compositions of the present invention for this purpose.*" (Emphasis added.)

MSU (whose motto is "Institutional Diversity: Excellence in Action") argued that existing patent guidelines allowed that "a product could still be manufactured under a European patent for export to states in which its use is not prohibited." Elsewhere in the document, the university challenged excessive concern over the "agonal breathing" to be found in some research cases. MSU reasoned that "it is probably a last-ditch or final reflex response in lower and higher animals, including humans, to breathe following very low oxygen levels in respiratory center of brain and thorax."

In addition, the patent cited 12 relevant journal references, four of which directly focused on human use. Their titles included "Suicide by ingestion of T-61," "Veterinary euthanasia drugs as suicide agents," and "Euthanasia and the right to die: Holland and the United States face the dilemma." It seems

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that human application was clearly on the minds of whoever prepared these documents.

Shortly before giving a lecture in Zurich, Switzerland, last summer, I met the patent attorney mentioned above. He passed these documents along to me, and asked whether I knew anything about this case. Unaware of it, I promised to inquire.

On the Friday before the Labor Day weekend, I reached by phone the director of MSU's "intellectual property" office. Upon mentioning the subject of my query, his pleasantly officious voice grew uncertain. "Oh, no," he whispered. He went on to report that one of the inventors of the compound had discussed early on the drug's marketing potential if used on humans, but the idea had been squelched. He said that the legal work for the European patent had been guided by the large multinational corporation that would produce and market the compound in Europe, but he was unable to release its name. After promising to call back with more information, he sighed and said, "You know, you've ruined my weekend."

About four hours later, the same official called back. A conversation with the university's attorney had restored his composure. He now reported that the licensing agreement with the unnamed company only allowed animal use, and that the language in the European patent claim was simply lawyer talk, designed to secure the best and broadest protection of patent rights for the client. It would be "misleading," he said, to say that the patent claim covered human use. In a subsequent conversation, I asked him if MSU would be willing to issue a statement fully renouncing human use. He replied that he did not have that authority, but would ask others who did.

Two weeks passed, and I heard no more. On September 22 the *Detroit News* ran my editorial, "MSU Gets into the Euthanasia Business."

The mysterious European multinational that had funded the relevant MSU research has since come out of the closet. It turned out to be Hoechst-Roussel, the $100-billion-a-year corporation in the headlines most recently for the termination of its association with RU486, the so-called abortion pill. Curiously, though, the company vehemently denied any role in seeking protection for human application of the MSU euthanasia drug.

Indeed, when *Mut Zur Ethik* filed a challenge to MSU's European patent award in late 1996, Hoechst-Roussel followed suit, independently arguing that Article 53 of the European patent convention—which specifies that patents shall not be granted for "inventions the publication or exploitation of which would be contrary to 'ordre public' or morality"—should come into play. Both *Mut Zur Ethik* and Hoechst-Roussel cited the MSU patent's coverage of potential human use as the basis for their objection.

In January, I received a letter from MSU President Peter McPherson, stating:

> MSU will never seek to benefit financially from use of such a drug for humans, and neither [the inventor] nor MSU will authorize use of the drug composition for humans. In addition, we are currently working with the company which licensed the composition to further define its field of use to include only specific lower mammals such as cats, dogs, etc.

Whereas Hoechst-Roussel had willingly sacrificed commercial interests to set matters right, the MSU statement fell short of being legally binding, actually leaving all options open for the future.

In fact, this whole story highlights American universities today. As Rockford Institute founder John Howard has long warned, the triumph of the research function over the traditional teaching function at our universities would eventually have perverse results. Add to this the quest for profits through union with corporate largesse, and our universities have entered an ethical black hole, no longer able even to recognize a moral question.

He went on to report that one of the inventors of the compound had discussed early on the drug's marketing potential if used on humans, but the idea had been squelched.

As the concerned German attorney asked me in Zurich, "Do the people of Michigan know about this patent?" I said it was unlikely, adding that such matters, being the province of bureaucracies, were usually concealed from public view.

The MSU story also brings to mind the "T4" euthanasia program, secretly implemented with government blessing by German doctors in 1939 (this was the one extermination order that Adolf Hitler actually signed, a mistake he did not repeat). It began with the grant of a "mercy death" to 5,000 mentally and physically handicapped children ("making angels," the physicians and nurses called it) and later counted 70,000 adult victims as well. The popular German media abetted Hitler's plans. A 1940 film, *Ich Klage An* ("I accuse"), concerned a pioneering professor of pathology, Thomas Heyt, whose rich and beautiful wife Hanna develops multiple sclerosis. After Heyt's frantic research efforts to develop a cure fail, he gives his wife a euthanasia drug. To piano accompaniment, the couple says farewell:

> *Hanna:* . . . I wish that was the end, Thomas.
> *Heyt:* It is the end, Hanna.
> *Hanna:* How I love you Thomas . . . [He weeps]
> *Hanna:* I wish I could give you my hand, Thomas.

This episode in culturally-conditioned, state-sanctioned murder only came to an end a year later, when mounting suspicions among the citizenry swelled into a public protest by Catholic Bishop Clemens August von Galen.

Michigan State University, of course, is far removed from such organized destruction of human life. The school may just want to protect its rights, lest they be claimed some day by another state-capitalist entity. But I wonder, with Bill Clinton in a remorseful mood, if now isn't the time that we apologize to the Germans for those misguided "doctor" trials at Nuremberg. ©

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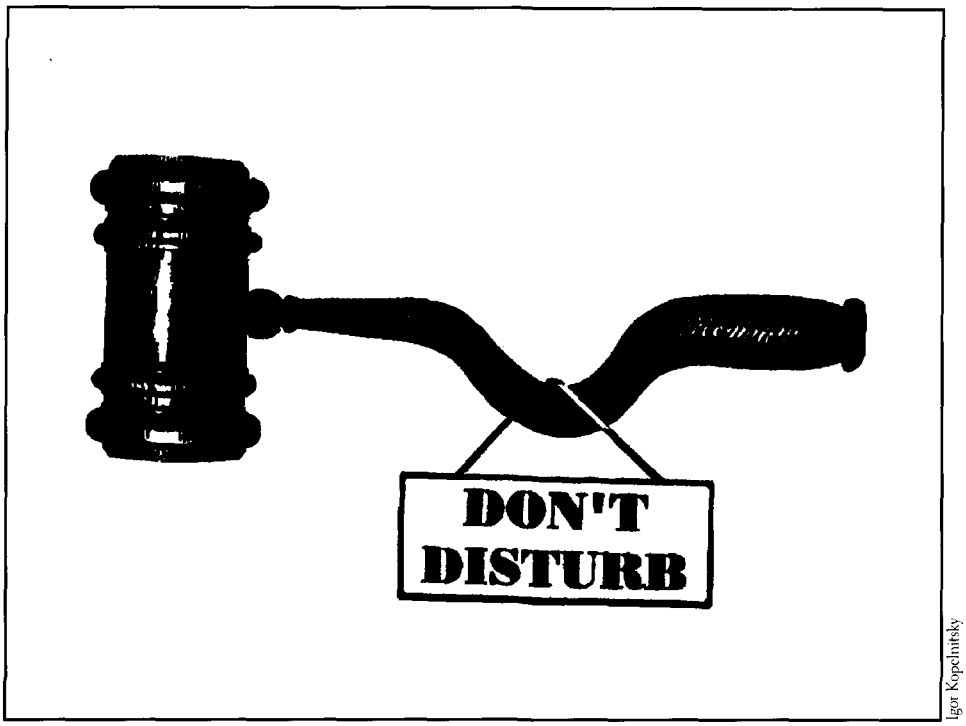
Crime, Punishment, and Civility

by Barry Baldwin



Igor Kopelnitsky

In 1777, upon the execution of the preacher Dr. William Dodd, Samuel Johnson produced one of his most memorable aphorisms: "Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully." Six years later, he deplored the abolition of public executions at Tyburn, echoing St. Paul on the evils of neophilia when he blamed this on the "fury of innovation." On Tyburn hangings, he observed, "Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators. If they do not draw spectators, they don't answer their purpose."

Johnson also regretted the decline in corporal punishment at school, speaking as both a former recipient and doler-out of same: "There is now less flogging in our great schools than formerly, but then less is learned there; so that what the boys get at one end, they lose at the other." He was equally disturbed by the growing tendency to spare the rod and spoil the child in private circumstances, rebuking the Scottish Lady Errol as follows: "The rod produces an effect which terminates in itself. A child is afraid of being whipped, and gets his task, and there's an end on't; whereas, by exciting emulation, and comparisons of superiority, you lay the foundation of lasting mischief; you make brothers and sisters hate each other."

Samuel Johnson was no advocate of (in the modern jargon) cruel and unusual punishments. He was a devout Christian and a man of good works, celebrated for his generosity to beggars, his provision of money and accommodation for many poor men and women, and his abolitionist views on slavery. He lived in the age of Reason, not the Dark Ages; and both he and his ideas were at the center of things, not on the margins.

Neither Johnson's arguments nor his character give comfort here for opponents of corporal and capital punishment, those who believe that no noose is good noose. Between Samuel Johnson and the code of Hammurabi (around 1900 B.C.) lies a stretch of over three and a half millennia. Here we find the earliest statement of the *lex talionis*—the revenge of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Despite the apparent severity, Hammurabi restricted the death penalty to homicide (deliberate and accidental), theft, adultery, and bearing false witness. For other crimes, the punishments were lesser, and graded. It should be emphasized for the benefit of feminists that women's rights were acknowledged: ill-used and neglected wives could obtain divorce, whilst mistresses were also allowed to have legal rights. On the punishing side, I especially like the dispositions for delinquent professionals. If a house fell on its owner, builder and architect were liable to death, mutilation, or a heavy fine; the same punishments awaited doctors convicted of malpractice.

The major fault in Hammurabi's Code is one that was frequently repeated in late Roman, Byzantine, and medieval law. Too often, there was one law for the rich and powerful, another for the poor and weak: law was a respecter of persons. With Hammurabi, this took a colorful form. One statute provided that if a nobleman bit off another nobleman's nose, the victim might bite off his attacker's nose in retribution. But if a nobleman bit off a commoner's nose, the victim was entitled to bite off only half his attacker's proboscis. We are not informed as to

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how common an event nose-biting was in ancient Babylon.

Hammurabi took justice and punishment away from individuals and put it in the hands of the state, via its judges. It must have seemed a good idea at the time, but at the movies, I always cheered for Dirty Harry and Charles Bronson. Given the inability of the police to cope—it's not their fault—there is a case to be made for vigilante justice. But this can go wrong. A glance at Europe's most primitive country, Albania, is instructive. There, albeit curbed under the savage communist rule of Enver Hoxha, vendetta and revenge are largely in private hands, though subject to an elaborate set of rules laid out in the centuries-old Great Kanon: intent to avenge a family wrong must be registered with the authorities; only certain family members may qualify as the avenger; the hunted is given so many days start; if he takes refuge in a tower of sanctuary, he is safe while there—some fugitives have been holed up for years. Talk about vengeance being a dish best taken cold! Recently, a man was beheaded with an axe in the lobby of Tirana's best hotel as culmination of one such family feud—his killer had been searching for him for 40 years.

I doubt we want this particular Balkan brew. But other entrepreneurial aspects of justice might be considered, such as the privatized prison, which has made some headway in America and Britain, in the latter thanks to Margaret Thatcher. Unlike most modern heads of Western states, Thatcher always voted to restore capital punishment. She defends it in characteristically crisp terms in the second volume of her memoirs, *The Path to Power*: "The state has not just a right but a duty to deter and punish violent crime and to protect the law-abiding public. . . . Despite all the uncertainties and complexities, the potential victim of the murderer deserves that highest protection which only the existence of the death penalty gives."

Greece and Rome are widely regarded as the cradle of Western civilization. Most of what we know as Greek history is, in fact, Athenian history, since there was no such thing as a united Greece until the Romans imposed it, and no unity after Rome until the 19th century. The first law code in Athens was the work of a certain Draco. Most crimes carried the death penalty, a state of affairs prefiguring later times in some other countries. The Stoics in Greece and Rome would cognately argue that all sins are equal, and their beliefs formed the mainstream school of philosophy for centuries.

Then came Solon, who repealed Draco's laws, which people had said were written in blood. When asked why he had attached the death penalty to nearly all crimes, Draco is supposed to have said that the lesser ones deserved it, hence for the major ones there was nothing else. Solon disagreed, but retained capital punishment for homicide. More to the point, to protect the weak, he gave every citizen the privilege of going to law on behalf of anyone whose rights had been infringed, summing up his purpose in these words: "The city where those who have not been wronged show themselves just as ready to punish the offender as those who have been is the best governed." This brings us back to the notion of who should punish: the state or the individual? We should recall that neither Greece nor Rome had anything resembling the modern District Attorney or Public Prosecutor.

This is the moment when an opponent of the present argument is most likely to bring up the case of Socrates, executed in 399 B.C. at the age of 70 on two unlikely-sounding charges: not believing in the gods of Athens and corrupting the youth. If the first indictment is problematical, the other charge is sustainable. Socrates was tried four years after the defeat of Athens by Sparta in the 27-year-long civil war. Her maritime empire was lost, and for eight bloody months Athens was tyrannized by a 30-man junta, ruling with Spartan military support. This was overthrown, and it was the restored democracy that put Socrates to death. Now, two of his most notorious pupils were the gilded youth Alcibiades, an Athenian John F. Kennedy of sorts, who had at various times plotted against the democracy and gone over to the enemy Sparta; and Critias, who became leader of the aforementioned junta. As we would say, Socrates was tried, convicted, and sentenced by a jury of his peers, not 12 good men and true, but 501. With bitter war memories and emotions still high, one can understand if not excuse the verdict. Is his condemnation any more bizarre than some of the Nuremberg ones in 1946? How ever did the judges let Albert Speer escape the gallows while such purely military men as Admiral Jodl did not? Also, albeit one of the most odious defendants (it was said that even Hitler found his anti-Semitic newspaper *Der Sturmer* distasteful), Julius Streicher was no worse than a propagandist.

In his *Seventh Letter*, Plato denounced the execution of Socrates as the one great crime of the democracy. It is understandable that this pupil of Socrates should deplore his old teacher's death—I wonder if my own students would take a similar view? But it did not deflect the mature Plato from favoring the death penalty and other condign punishments. In his *Republic*, he goes on about flogging, eye-gouging, and crucifixion, while in his last and most totalitarian manifesto, *The Laws*, he prescribes death for those who do not believe in the gods of his proposed state, which was one of the very things that brought Socrates down.

Socrates is often thought of, somewhat romantically, as the pagan Christ, a comparison encouraged by the early Church. Both were artisans by pedigree and training, respectively sculptor and carpenter. Both were eloquent on a soapbox, good at debate, riposte, and asking awkward questions in public. Neither published anything—they would have been denied tenure in a modern university—and their ideas are chiefly known through the versions of their students, not a form of literary immortality I would choose for myself. Both were put to death by the state, the Athenian democracy and the Roman Empire. God, it would appear, was in favor of capital punishment, not to mention cruel and unusual forms. Why else would He arrange it that His Son be flogged almost to death, then crucified? The Gospel writers spend no time denouncing the principle of execution: what was wrong was that Christ had been chosen for death rather than Barabbas, who "lay amongst them for insurrection," meaning he was an anti-Roman guerrilla, as the two thieves on the cross may have been. What Christ thought of these matters is not clear, His most memorable utterances not always being consonant with each other. Does "thou shalt not kill" include capital punishment? What about "Render unto Caesar . . . "?

We may add in the case of God that Hell and its torments qualify as cruel and unusual punishments, a notion popular through Christian history from Roman and medieval times via Hieronymus Bosch to Sunday morning television evangelists. A rather nice cop-out was once provided by the Catholic priest in that popular British sitcom *Bless Me, Father*: "Impossible to think that Hell does not exist, impossible to think that there is anyone there." Back on earth, we should stress that had Christ

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been a Roman citizen, He could not have been legally crucified, because citizens were exempt from this mode of execution. That is why Paul, who was a citizen and who claims his rights as one in the *New Testament*, was beheaded. Pontius Pilate understood this point before signing Christ's death warrant. Incidentally, it is still not generally recognized in the West that Pontius is venerated as a saint in the Ethiopian Church (feast day, June 25).

As with various other punishments, crucifixion was reserved for foreigners and slaves. The Romans did not play down its horrors. It was intended to be *the* deterrent. A Roman law states that it was designed "so that others might be deterred by its sight from the same crimes." Did it work? Well, after the 6,000 survivors of Spartacus's slave rebellion were executed in 70 B.C., there were no more slave uprisings on such a scale. Do we attribute this to the efficacy of punishment or to the Romans' amelioration of a slave's lot in life?

This whole question of deterrence is a notorious bugbear. Too often, it degenerates into both sides of the argument waving lists of statistics to prove their respective points. While agreeing that it does not clinch anything, I will wave one of my own, taken from a July 2, 1995, article by Angela Ellis-Jones in the London *Sunday Telegraph*. In the period 1959-63 in Britain, where the death penalty was abolished in 1965, there was an annual average of 284 murders and manslaughters. The corresponding figure for 1989-93 was 613. What no figures show, of course, because they cannot, are the murders that were *not* committed by criminals who were deterred by the fear of execution.

We have no figures for crime from any period of Greek or Roman history—I examined the matter many years ago in an essay on crime and criminals in the Graeco-Roman world. But there is a cognate issue here. Advocates of gun control always ridicule the formula of the National Rifle Association: guns don't kill, people do. The Romans, however, who had no guns, seem in principle to support the NRA, for another of their laws states that "Those who carry weapons for the sake of protecting their own safety do not appear to carry weapons for the sake of killing men." It is notable that the catalog of horrors of life in Rome (it sounds roughly like an ancient Detroit where Robocop would fear to go) compiled by the satirist Juvenal circa A.D. 100 makes no mention of criminals or honest citizens using weapons. By contrast, according to the historian Thucydides, in classical Greece, Athens was the first community where the citizens voluntarily gave up the right to bear arms. But we know from Athenian historians and law-court speeches that violent crime did not disappear as a result.

The Romans are, of course, famous for their laws, above all those bearing on crime and property. The notion of condign punishment is there from the beginning, in the earliest set of laws (mid-fifth century B.C.) established in the new Republic, the Twelve Tables—two more than Moses if you like your wisdom dispensed in tablet form. Modern farmers might like the death penalty prescribed for black magicians who moved their neighbors' standing crops into their own fields—rustling corn, indeed! My own favorite is the one that had arsonists burned alive.

Such strains of what may technically be called (in textbooks, it often is) judicial savagery extend from Babylon through Greece and Rome to late antiquity, then to Byzantium and medieval Europe. It is notable that the first Byzantine law code (that of Leo III, A.D. 717-40) to prescribe blinding and other mutilations for specific crimes was promulgated exactly at the time that the Byzantines came into forcible contact with the new power and religion of Islam, the strict Sharia version of whose justice famously lops off the hands of thieves.

It was likewise in medieval Europe, and in England down to at least the Tudor period. In the words of the best modern writer on this subject (J.G. Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order in the Later Middle Ages*):

> There is little evidence that the mass of medieval men objected to the use made of imprisonment. It was a social and legal necessity. As well as being a tool of secular rulers, it was popular with ecclesiastics. That all criminals should be punished was an axiom which few men denied. Most medieval Englishmen agreed that on conviction a misdoer should be punished as quickly as possible and that the punishment should be so arranged that all should notice it.

It can here be subjoined that the notion of prison as a punishment was not an ancient one. Bellamy also shows from the copious medieval records three other pertinent things: the most ferocious punishments available to judge and jury were not always used; care was taken that prison guards were decent men, not brutes; and there were complaints that prisons were often too luxurious, especially when compared to the poor conditions of many a free man, a situation all too recognizable nowadays.

In the last few years, politicians of many stripes in many countries have called for the restoration of capital punishment, also corporal punishment, and the stiffening of conditions for parole. Currently in Canada, a Liberal (not a right-winger) Member of Parliament (John Nunziata) is pushing for a measure that will make it harder, if not impossible, for murderers to be released from prison on the say-so of a social worker or psychiatrist. It does not matter what one thinks of these particular politicians or their other policies. Whether or not we have the right or duty to take the life of somebody who has taken that of somebody else has always been and remains a cosmic moral issue.

Opponents of the death penalty always trot out three objections: an absolutist "thou shalt not kill"; the possibility of executing an innocent person; the lack of proof that capital punishment is a deterrent. The first one is a comfortingly glib prescription, but how can it reasonably be used to protect someone who has already broken it by committing murder? And does it mean that no one may *ever* be killed in *any* circumstances? If someone had had the chance to bump off Hitler before he had killed more millions, would it have been morally superior not to do so? Furthermore, "thou shalt not kill" is one sentence in the Bible, a religious text which large numbers of people do not believe. We are already selective about which of the Ten Commandments we follow: "Honor the Sabbath Day" went out the window long ago. The inconsistency of liberals on this is typical and total. On the one hand, they demand a secular society, no prayers in public schools. On the other, they do not scruple to reach in for one sentence out of a book they otherwise despise.

The argument that a jury of fallible humans may convict an innocent person is a red herring. We simply use common sense. Whenever there is the slightest doubt about a defendant's guilt, the death penalty should not be used. When

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there are no doubts, thanks to confession and/or witnesses, plus DNA tests, it should.

I suppose that in the 30 years I have lived in Canada, the two most notorious murder trials (Paul Bernado apart) have been those of Steven Truscott and Clifford Olsen. Truscott was accused (in the 1960's) of the rape and murder of a young girl. He was convicted, but not executed, served a sentence, and was released some years ago. The evidence was circumstantial, and subsequent books by Isobel Lebourdais and Bill Trent did much to undermine the prosecution's case. Obviously, Truscott should not have been sentenced to death. But there was no doubt about the guilt of child-murderer Clifford Olsen, who gloried in his crimes and made deals for cash whereby he led police to the graves of further victims. Yet this creature is spared to live out a comfortable life in prison at the expense of taxpayers and the feelings of his victims' parents.

A case from 1950's Britain is often exhumed by abolitionists, especially since the recent movie and television documentary about it. A youth named Derek Bentley was tried for the shooting of an unarmed police officer during an attempted robbery. He was the accomplice of a younger teenager, Christopher Craig, who actually pulled the trigger. The case turned on the words "Let him have it, Chris," shouted by Bentley to Craig. The prosecution maintained he meant Craig should shoot the officer; the defense argued that he was telling Craig to give up the gun and surrender. Both were convicted; Bentley was hanged. Since Craig was legally too young to be executed, it was seen as particularly unfair that Bentley should die. This misses the point, which is that the law that saved Craig was wrong. Teenage murderers are not naughty children but criminal thugs who know very well what they are doing. Again, liberals want it both ways: it is right that teenagers be allowed to drive cars (lethal weapons!), get married, and so on, but when it comes to taking responsibility for their actions, oh dear no, the little darlings are too young.

When capital punishment was abolished in Britain and Canada, one of the main arguments raised against it was that it was not acceptable in a "civilized society." But 30 years on, will anyone seriously maintain that either British or Canadian society is more "civilized" without the death penalty than it was with capital punishment?

The death penalty is often attacked as a mere act of revenge. Quite so. It is, and what is wrong with that? A distinguished Roman historian at Yale, Ramsay McMullen, denouncing what he called Roman judicial savagery, quoted Tocqueville: "A *mesure que les peuples deviennent plus semblables les uns aux autres, ils se montrent réciproquement plus compatissants pour leurs misères, et le droit s'adoucit.*" Alas, fine words butter no parsnips: we are not there yet.

As earlier said, neither side has any conclusive statistics for deterrence. And one might add (I'm surprised abolitionists so rarely do) that Britain's last official executioner (like his father before him), Albert Pierrepoint, concluded his memoirs (*Executioner: Pierrepoint*) with the statement that as far as he could tell, hanging was more revenge than deterrent. The point is, however, that all civilized societies have had coercive punishments, capital and corporal. *Not* to have had them is untypical and perverse. Desire for revenge is innate in humanity. It is not enough to reserve it for God. He may not exist, and if He does, if you take the Deist approach from Epicurus to Lord Herbert of Cherbury to Voltaire, He may not be concerned.

Although it is congenial to give oneself the last word on everything, it may often be more cogent to concede it to someone else, especially in the present debate where marginality is an issue. So I shall quote from Roger Scruton's collection of essays *Untimely Tracts*, which was occasioned by the case of Klaus Barbie, who was brought with great fanfare from Bolivia to France in order to be elaborately protected from the fate he deserved. After this shaft, Scruton wrote: "A system of punishment without the penalty of death is a moral absurdity. Punishment exists in order to express and confirm the consciousness of crime. It is an essential instrument of civilization. . . . When a criminal comes before the law, he comes before an agent of justice, whose purpose is to make him suffer for his crime. Morally speaking, that is the important act. To think of punishment either as a deterrent or as a cure is to misunderstand it. . . . It is the criminal who chose to murder, and therefore he chose to die." ©

Griswold Slanders Poe One Midnight

by Lawrence Dugan

Croak not, black angel . . .
—King Lear

Perhaps I'll say that he used to claim
He was the only surviving soldier
Of the Alamo, a hero of Texas
Independence. No; when a lie is that
Romantic, it might make sense somehow.
Poe at the Alamo. Why not? Some mad
Professor starts to search, and who knows what
He'll find in San Antonio legends:
Poe on the walls of Fort St. Anthony
With Crockett and Bowie . . .
I'll say he said it.
Boasted over a drink (or dead sober,
For that matter) or left a note folded
In a book, hinting he was a hero;
Or told the tale to a drunken printer
One night on Callowhill Street as they walked
Home to Fairmount. It's a risky lie, people
Have swallowed so many about the man,
This could be the one that chokes the whole mess
Up, leaving my work in an alleyway.
Enough of Ed Poe, magazine magician.
What is a bottle of ink against a ghost?

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A Bard, By Any Other Name . . .

by Frank Brownlow

"Could Shakespeare give a theory of Shakespeare?"

—R.W. Emerson

Alias Shakespeare
by Joseph Sobran
New York: The Free Press;
311 pp., $25.00

Igor Kopelnitsky

Story-telling is a feature of all societies. If the world is to make sense, if we are to live together in families, cities, nations, if we are to do our daily work, if life is to be livable at all, we must tell each other stories. "How do you explain that?" someone asks, and in reply someone else tells him a story. In modern times, that is when the trouble starts. A doctor I knew used to say as he peered down one's throat, "I don't like the story," and whenever he said that one knew there were difficulties ahead.

For the last 500 years, scholars and scientists who "didn't like the story" have been discarding or revising a great many of them. The wonderful fiction of the Ptolemaic universe was one of the first to go, followed shortly after by King Arthur and his knights. Nor is the process about to stop. The biologist Julian Huxley said he did not need God in the laboratory, and even as I write scholars and scientists are changing stories as their research proceeds.

It can be an unsettling business when one of our favorite stories goes. The Einsteinian universe is a lonely place even if it is navigable by camera-bearing space-probes. It does not always comfort people to be told that the laboratory is a place of discovery. They may use the discoveries happily enough, but that does not stop them agreeing with the poet X.J. Kennedy when he sings, "Somebody stole my myths, Took all their gist and piths."

Even literary scholars have contributed their mite of disenchantment. Shakespeare was once the hero of a good story, a literary Dick Whittington. Starting life as a virtual juvenile delinquent, so the story went, he found his way to London, and got a job holding horses outside the theater. Soon he had his own business. Then he migrated inside the theater, became an actor of bit parts, and started tinkering with other men's plays. In no time at all a colossal genius manifested itself; he made a pile of money, became a gentlemen, bought the biggest house in his home town, and lived happily ever after.

That was a story people could use. It showed how the most unpromising goose could prove a swan, and how a grateful nation should reward ability. In its time, the story even had a touch of the marvelous. Shakespeare having appeared, socially speaking, from nowhere. Then the scholars dismantled the story, piece by piece. Shakespeare neither poached deer nor held horses. His father was the mayor of his town and a justice of the peace. His mother was an heiress in a modest way. He did not tinker with other people's plays; he wrote his own, building on the techniques of contemporaries like Lyly and Marlowe. True, he made money and bought a big house, but he also invested in unpoetic things like tithes and malt. As for living happily ever after, his last days in Stratford were embittered by scandal in his family. In short, Shakespeare was no Dick Whittington. He was the ambitious eldest son

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of prosperous burgher parents, and about as interesting as another famous burgher artist, J.S. Bach, if less respectable by burgher standards. Shorn of legend, Shakespeare's life does not make a romantic effect. Insofar as it has a moral, it is that middle-class ambition, work, and thrift have scored again.

Not surprisingly, quite a lot of people dislike this new, documentable story, even resent it, and find themselves impelled to offer an alternative. Joseph Sobran is one of them, even though one would expect a conservative writer to have a soft spot for the scholars' entrepreneurial Shakespeare. "So severe is Schoenbaum," he writes, speaking of S. Schoenbaum's *William Shakespeare: A Documentary Life*, "in rejecting all the unproven legends about the playwright that he leaves Shakespeare a mere specter. . . . From Schoenbaum it would seem a short step to doubting the whole standard account of Shakespeare."

So Mr. Sobran takes that momentous step into an undocumented void, and offers an alternative. According to the record, he says—having disqualified for his purposes all records of Shakespeare's literary activity—Shakespeare was barely literate; he was "a shrewd, tough businessman with some rough edges," a man of modest origins from a provincial town, who made money in the London theater, but about whom otherwise not much is known. *Ergo*, or *argal*, as the gravedigger in *Hamlet* would say, the writer must have been a different person who concealed himself behind the businessman's name. Casting about for candidates for the lead in this story of conspiracy and concealment, other people besides Mr. Sobran have come up with a surprising number of names, including Queen Elizabeth I herself. Mr. Sobran's favorite, though, is Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford.

Oxford was a well-educated, well-traveled literary aristocrat who wrote some poems which survive, and some comedies which do not. Like others of his class, he employed actors, and according to his father-in-law, Lord Burghley, he liked to hang around the theaters and associate with unseemly people like writers and players. Burghley had other reasons for worry, too. Even from Mr. Sobran's admiring account Oxford appears to have been a rather silly man—not that this disqualifies him, I suppose, as a writer. Being a nobleman he would not want to appear in print under his own name, so he borrowed Shakespeare's.

And there it is, a romantic story outlined to replace the scholarly one. To finish it, all one needs to do is redate nearly all Shakespeare's plays (since Oxford died in 1604), rewrite Elizabethan theater history, and explain why someone like Ben Jonson kept on talking about Shakespeare as if he knew him.

To speak now solely of the plot of this story, there are some things wrong with it. First, it is supposed to be true. Scholarship requires true stories to be based on documentary evidence, and in this case there is none. The plot also requires its characters to behave strangely. Mr. Sobran's Oxford, as writer of the *Sonnets*, has a homosexual affair with the Earl of Southampton; yet he devotes his first 17 sonnets to persuading his lover to marry his daughter. That's a bit over the top, even for Oxford. And what about Ben Jonson, another conspirator? What was in his mind as he trotted about Britain, long after Shakespeare and Oxford were dead, and chatted to his hosts, often cattily, about his famous fellow-writer? Or what about Shakespeare himself, as he walked about London, and people he met said, "Oh Mr. Shakespeare, I do so like your poems." What did he do? Stand there and grin? Mutter something about having to catch a wherry, and slink away? One place he could not slink away from was the stage, whether at the Globe or at court, where he acted with his fellow actors in the famous plays attributed to him.

Mr. Sobran gets upset, even angry, because Shakespeare scholars refuse, point-blank, to take this story seriously. He would rather be a crank, he says, "than belong to the mass of scholars, who, ever mindful of tenure, promotion, grants . . . and respectability, never deviate from scholarly consensus." Here we can detect the outlines of yet another conspiratorial story, powered by a strong animus against professional story-spoilers. Its heroes are independent-minded, even cranky amateurs confronted by a guild of professional hacks who spoil everything they touch.

This is another usable story, especially in America, where some child of nature is always proposing to reform the nation's intellectual life on lines proposed by the fellow who wanted to hang the professors and burn the schools. Is it true? Some of the most respected Shakespeare scholars have been amateurs themselves. There are still independent scholars abroad. As for the professionals, they are a competitive lot, and, unlike the Oxfordians, by no means wedded to a consensus or a hypothesis. A scholar who had evidence that Shakespeare did not write the plays and poems attributed to him would publish it, probably in the *New York Times*, and wait for the offers to come in.

There is nothing unusual about the fact that we know little about Shakespeare's personal life. We know very little about any Tudor writer's personal life, and especially the early part of it. Even so, as a result of the scholarship Mr. Sobran despises, more is known about Shakespeare than about most of his contemporaries, including the fact that he was a well-bred, gentlemanly sort of man; in those days people who called him "gentle Shakespeare" were not speaking loosely. No doubt people who spoke highly of him as a poet meant what they said, too. The only reason Mr. Sobran is ignorant of things like this is that in his alternate world they were said about someone else.

Every now and again, too, new details about Shakespeare, his family, and his works emerge, and find their way into the

LIBERAL ARTS

CRIME INDEX

According to a report published in the Winter 1997 issue of the *LEAA Advocate* (the journal of the Law Enforcement Alliance of America), the United States Armed Forces lost 512 personnel in various foreign conflicts from 1977 to 1993. During the same period, 400,000 American citizens were murdered, which means that 781 citizens died for every soldier killed in action.

The same issue publicizes a report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics which found that the "156,000 parole violators returned to state prisons during 1991 committed 'at least' 6,800 murders, 5,500 rapes, 8,800 assaults and 22,500 robberies during an average of 13 months of freedom while on early release."

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standard books. Nor is the scholars' consensus all that consensual. Many scholars now argue, on documentary evidence, that Shakespeare's family was Catholic, that he was well-connected on his mother's side, and that his father was a good deal better off than has been thought.

Yet the most important thing we know about Shakespeare will always be the fact that he wrote those plays and poems. They are the reason we bother with the rest of his life at all, and the only working assumption one can make about the relationship between Shakespeare's life and work is that he was the kind of person who produced it. It may be true in a general way that all literature is autobiographical; but although sheer human curiosity might tempt us to try, we cannot turn Shakespeare's work back into his life without documentary help. Mr. Sobran is not alone in thinking that the character of Polonius is based on Lord Burghley; it is a pleasant speculation, but there is no reason to believe it is true. Similarly, Mr. Sobran thinks that the author of the plays must have visited Italy; but one cannot argue one's way from literature to life like that. Fiction does not convert into fact, however true to life it seems to be. Besides, as things now stand, should we ever find out that the author of *Othello* had gone to Venice, it will be William Shakespeare who did the going.

One effect of Mr. Sobran's attack on professors for wasting time and money in pursuit of Shakespeare is to misdirect his readers' attention from the huge achievement of humanist scholarship in our time, including Shakespeare scholarship, which is, ironically enough, the recovery of the real, usable past. Scholarship is the reason why, to give an example, if Mr. Sobran enjoys Shakespeare's plays, he can now plan to see a performance in a rebuilt Globe Theater on the banks of the Thames. In fact a reader who wants to experience the excitement and success of scholarly detection could do no better than read John Orrell's *The Quest for Shakespeare's Globe*, a book in which one can follow a scholar as he elicits the form of a lost theater from recovered fact.

Mr. Sobran tells a story, but it strains credulity, and he has recovered no facts. His alternative past has its own kind of bizarre interest, but it is not true. ◇

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Why They Hate Jefferson

by Clyde Wilson

The Long Affair: Thomas Jefferson and the French Revolution, 1785-1800
by Conor Cruise O'Brien
Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 367 pp., $29.95

◆

What a marathon of Jefferson-bashing we have had in the last few years. This book by the "global statesman" O'Brien follows several other critical biographies, all of which have been highlighted in the fashionable reviews. More than usually offensive to Jefferson admirers were a collection (*The View from Monticello*) by University of Virginia professors trashing their founder (not surprising since they are all carpet-baggers anyway); a slashing attack in *National Review*; and, worst of all, Ken Burns' latest television "documentary."

None of this literature tells us anything about Jefferson. There is no scholarship—that is, research and discovery—involved. We have here, rather, a case study in intellectual sociology: that is, an exhibit by fashionable intellectuals determining what is and is not acceptable to their version of the American regime. What they tell us is that Jefferson is out now.

Friends, you must have either Jefferson or Hamilton. All the fundamental conflicts in our history were adumbrated during the first decade of the General Government in the contest symbolized by these two men. Hamilton lost in the short run, but triumphed in the long run. He would find much that is agreeable in the present American regime—a plutocratic kritarchy which we persist, by long habit of self-deception, in calling a democracy. But Thomas Jefferson would not be at all happy with what has happened to this country; he might even suggest that the time had come for a little revolution. The host of petty intellectuals and pundits, elitists, and would-be elitists—tame scribblers of the American Empire—sense this, and so Jefferson must be dealt with appropriately. The Establishment is frightened by the rumblings they hear from the Great Beast (that is, we the American people). They are shocked to realize that Jefferson honestly did believe in the people; that he believed the soundest basis for government to be popular consent and a severely limited government.

Hamilton, on the other hand, believed in rule by "the [self-appointed] best" and in "energetic government" operating in the interest of private profit. For the better part of a century we had protective tariffs which burdened the great mass of the American people, agriculturalists, and consumers, while profiting large capital. Now that it is in the interest of large capital to ship American workers' jobs to the Third World, we have every petty pundit singing the praises of "free trade." Just what Alexander ordered.

Hamilton, it is true, was rather indifferent to the do-gooder side of the federal leviathan. Yet do-gooderism was axiomatic for the New Englanders who made up the largest base of his support: people whose instinct is immediately to translate every moral prompting into governmental coercion. This is why you and I now have to add the cost of airbags to our car, by federal decree, whether we want them or not.

O'Brien's brief against Jefferson is twofold. First, he favored the French Revolution, even its excesses, which show him to be an irresponsible bloody-minded parlor revolutionary. Second, Jefferson was not a racial egalitarian and is therefore an unacceptable symbol for modern America.

O'Brien, as a number of reviewers have pointed out, lacks the most fundamental requirement of historianship—that is, the careful use of documents and understanding of context. He makes no distinction between Jefferson's friendship for the French people—his always cautious hopes that they might achieve popular government—and support for the Terror. On this subject (as on most others), there is much better treatment from Albert Jay Nock's old biography, *Jefferson*. As for Jefferson not being a racial egalitarian—well, neither were Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson or, for that matter, Harry Truman and Ike Eisenhower. So what?

What we have here is elitist hysteria, an old and familiar phenomenon. During the election of 1800, the president of Yale, Timothy Dwight, stumped New England trying, with the aid of most of the New England clerisy, to convince the people that Jefferson was a representative of the Illuminati. John Adams cowered in his fortified house in fear of The Mob, while Jefferson lived at ease among his 200 slaves. The Federalists persuaded themselves that the guillotines were about to be set up if that horrible decadent Southerner were elected—ousting them from their power and prestige. Today, we have merely the latest version of the thing. Petty elitists, unsure of their unmerited positions and fearful of the people, conjure up a dark spectacle of terror. How unthinkable that we should have those yahoos out there calling the shots, instead of their betters.

The trouble is, Jefferson was always a liberal but never a Liberal. Liberals (for lack of a better term) for years perpetuated an elaborate hoax making Jefferson one of them—which he never was or could have been. Now that it is obvious that he really *wasn't*, an elaborate excommunication—equally a hoax—from the American canon seems to them necessary. It would be comedic if it were not such a malicious perversion of the historical truth. The burden of O'Brien's teaching is that Jefferson does not belong in, and must be ejected from, the American civil religion. But does America have a civil religion? Ought we to have one? Who says so? And if we do, do we need some damned foreigner to tell us what is to be left in, and what out, of it? What Jefferson most fundamentally signifies is that we do not need secular priests governing our civic life; we need merely to trust in a limited, popular government while keeping a wary eye on the self-appointed clerisy.

The pundits are right. Jefferson does not offer aid and comfort to the present regime. And let us thank the Creator who endowed us with our inalienable rights for that. We still have in Jefferson a powerful symbol for liberty and the

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consent of the people that no number of pettifogging scribblers can suppress.

Clyde Wilson is a professor of history at the University of South Carolina.

Not Ours to Give

by Harold O.J. Brown

Unrepentant, Self-Affirming, Practicing: Lesbian/Bisexual/Gay People Within Organized Religion
by Gary David Comstock
New York: Continuum;
348 pp., $29.95

◆

Gary David Comstock is Protestant chaplain and visiting assistant professor of sociology at Wesleyan University. The author cites his "lover/partner Ted" in the acknowledgments, and thus manifestly belongs to the group he describes in uniformly favorable terms. The book is interesting, and in many respects challenging to the traditionally minded reader. A jacket blurb by Professor Wade Clark Roof of the University of California at Santa Barbara calls it a "useful and timely piece of research." Despite its impressive scholarly apparatus, however, *Unrepentant* exhibits several methodological and philosophical defects. First, we note that Comstock draws his data from unrepresentative sources: most of his tables compare the United Church of Christ (UCC)—an almost entirely liberal denomination and one of two which have recognized homosexuality as morally legitimate—and the United Methodist Church (UMC), a much larger denomination with strongly liberal tendencies, especially among the denominational leadership, but in which conservative and evangelical elements exercise considerable influence. He assumes the accuracy of the gravely flawed Kinsey studies on human sexuality and their conclusion that ten percent of the males in American society are more or less exclusively homosexual. He refers to "Good News," a parachurch organization in Atlanta, but makes no reference to the Good News Fellowship, an important evangelical witness in the United Methodist Church that naturally takes a dim view of homosexual conduct, despite his extensive use of UMC material. Second, he relies extensively on first-person accounts of homosexuals (and bisexuals) in various churches and other religious groups, but gives no testimony from former or recovering homosexuals in any of the many recovery groups, such as Exodus, Harvest, and the like. Perhaps this is not a methodological fault, as Comstock is concerned with how homosexuals respond to religion. Nevertheless, at least some of them do so by repentance and change: a fact that is surely worth noting.

Philosophically, he seems to presuppose what he is trying to prove. He begins with the presupposition that homosexuality is constitutional or genetic, an assumption that is frequently made but so far cannot be proven. Despite the fact that all traditional religions have serious strictures against homosexual conduct—which he notes—Comstock simply assumes that the morality and acceptability of homosexual conduct and relationships can be taken for granted, and that the efforts of traditionalist Christians and others to help homosexuals to change are dismissable as prejudicial and "homophobic." When homosexuals encounter criticism and opposition within traditional Christian or Jewish circles and migrate to Asian religions, New Age cults, or even Wiccan goddess worship, he regards this as a perfectly understandable response to the lack of understanding and love of the traditionalists. The fact that it can also be interpreted as apostasy into unbelief or even idolatry, motivated by an unwillingness to come to terms with the moral code of a traditional religion, is simply ignored. "I want to live in a way the church forbids: shame on the church!"

In addition to dismissing without examination the commandments of traditional religion, Comstock bases much of his presentation on an unexpressed presupposition: namely, that homosexuals generally form committed, faithful, loving relationships. Nevertheless, he does include bisexuals in his subject group, although the emergence of so-called bisexuals as a distinct and privileged group on the level of male homosexuals and lesbians certainly raises the question of whether we are not dealing simply with sexual profligacy rather than with any constitutional or genetic orientation, since the phenomenon of bisexuality, by definition, excludes the idea of committed, faithful, "monogamous" relationships, which forms a presupposition for much of his argument.

The assumption that the basic pattern of sexual relations is committed monogamy has considerably less basis with regard to homosexuals than to heterosexuals, while even the latter's commitment to faithful monogamy is far from total. Nevertheless, among heterosexuals the concept of marital fidelity is credible enough for churches to present celibacy before marriage and fidelity in marriage as attainable ideals. Among homosexuals, and particularly gay men, the ideal of a committed, loving relationship with one person is seldom achieved over a long period. Not only "bisexuals" but gay men often seem to have more than one "partner"—indeed, they often pursue a very large number of them. This is one of the main reasons for the rapid spread of AIDS through the male homosexual population. If organized religions—and not merely the trendier groups such as the Unitarian Universalists, United Church of Christ, and Reconstructionist Judaism—are persuaded to accept the legitimacy of homosexuality (and, even more, of bisexuality), they will be forced to abandon all standards of sexual conduct for their clergy, not to mention for their general membership. And given the tendency of other churches, including the Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant denominations, to "go with the flow," however sluggishly, such an attitude on the part of the liberals will have an impact on the general culture and ultimately on the more conservative groups—unless they steel themselves to fight it.

Much of this book consists of sympathetic reports of homosexuals' experiences with organized religion. Some have welcoming and affirming contacts; others find rejection, condemnation, and even verbal and physical abuse. What Comstock does not consider is the homosexual who encounters loving acceptance of his person but not his practice, and who is thereby led to repentance and sometimes to transformation. He gives no attention to the homosexuals and lesbians—they are numerous—who, having been challenged by the received moral standards of the church, repent and change their conduct as well as, in some cases, their sexual orientation.

The thought that homosexuals can be transformed is anathema to the gay and lesbian movement. Even though with

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God nothing is impossible, activists regard homosexuality as so fundamental a part of one's identity that the possibility of change seems to threaten the homosexual with annihilation. How numerous are repentant, changed, or recovering homosexuals by comparison with those who do not change? We really don't know. It is a dogma of the homosexual movement that true homosexuals *cannot* change; but there is much anecdotal evidence to the contrary, none of it less worthy of attention than the anecdotes that fill much of Comstock's text.

This book ends with a poem in memory of Phyllis, a lesbian who wanted to become a UMC clergywoman but who was rejected and consequently shot herself. The implication is clearly that she killed herself because of the unloving rejection by the UMC. However, one might plausibly ask whether Phyllis really had the right to demand a teaching-ministering status in a denomination that considers her way of life—whether chosen or constitutional—unbiblical and sinful. Surely being a Methodist and desiring to be a Methodist minister is not so "constitutional" a state that Phyllis was faced with an irreconcilable dilemma.

What is evidently at stake is the fact that many if not all homosexuals, unlike winebibbers, consider their predilection (i.e., their homosexuality) to *be* their identity, which they cannot in any sense suppress or deny. Inasmuch as there are many fellowships—not so many nominally Christian ones, but at least a few, as well as some Jewish groups and numerous nontraditional religions—that accept homosexuality, why are individuals such as Phyllis insistent on being ordained in a church that does not accept it? Is it not possible that the despair that led Phyllis to her sad act was motivated by the fear that perhaps the UMC was right, and that she and her way of life were wrong? Comstock's book is a protracted plea for all religions to accept homosexuality as an alternate expression of love, but to do so is not an option for those who continue to uphold the authority of the Bible, or even of Christian tradition.

Harold O.J. Brown is the director of The Rockford Institute's Center on Religion and Society and teaches theology and ethics at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. His latest book is The Sensate Culture *(Word).*

A Meeting of Equals

by James Scruton

Homage to Robert Frost
by Joseph Brodsky, Seamus Heaney, and Derek Walcott
New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux; 117 pp., $18.00

◆

A poet's critical prose holds interest for many people. Scholars examine it for clarifications or contradictions of the poet's verse, admiring readers for echoes of the language that captivated them in the poetry, to which students and new readers may want some kind of "authorized introduction." When writing about the work of others poets reveal as much, or more, about themselves and their own work. These three essays by Seamus Heaney, Derek Walcott, and the late Joseph Brodsky, gathered in *Homage to Robert Frost*, remind us why we should trust poets more than most critics when it comes to discussing the art.

"Among major poets of the English language in this century," Heaney observes, "Robert Frost is the one who takes the most punishment." Much of this brief volume's appeal lies in its unabashed praise for Frost's achievement. It continues the attempts of William Pritchard and a few others to rescue the poet from the grotesqueries of his biographer, Lawrance Thompson, and the kind of portentous generalizations launched by Lionel Trilling upon the occasion of Frost's 80th birthday, when he pronounced Frost "the most terrifying poet of our time."

It is not just that poets—these three in particular—provide an inside view, a practitioner's insight into Frost's colloquial tone or his handling of meter. The initial delight of these essays is, as Frost himself might have said, in their own sound, the aptness and pleasure of their own phrase-making. What academic critic these days would credit Frost's "jocular vehemence" as Brodsky does? Or observe, as does Heaney, the "lovely pliant grace" of "Birches" or confess to a "lifetime of pleasure in Frost's poems as events in language, flaunts and vaunts full of projective force and deliquescent backwash, the crestings of a tide that lifts all spirits." Over and over, as when Walcott describes the "melodious sarcasm" of Frost's dramatic monologues, we are reminded that, analytical as they are, these essays are essentially appreciations rather than arguments. Refreshingly, the only axes to grind belong to Frost's laconic New Englanders.

Another advantage of these essays is concentration. Each takes up only two or three poems, focusing on the metrical tension of a certain line or the consonantal echo throughout a given stanza. This devotion to particulars pays greater homage to Frost than any of the formulas to which we are accustomed by now. Moreover, by attending to some of the less-anthologized and less-remarked poems, *Homage to Robert Frost* renews our interest and satisfaction in the poetry instead of merely confirming its greatness (or its darkness, or its "terror").

The essay-discussions overlap slightly, making the overall effect almost that of a panel. What repetition there is comes as something of a glance down the row, as if with a familiar nod Walcott were referring to a comment made a while earlier. For example, when early on in Heaney's essay he declares that Frost "never shirked the bleakness of that last place in himself," he seems to echo a point made just a few pages earlier by Brodsky: "If this poem ["Home Burial"] is dark, darker still is the mind of its maker. . . . He stands outside, denied re-entry, perhaps not coveting it at all."

Taking the essays individually, we not only find things in Frost we may have missed or forgotten; we also learn a great deal about what animates three contemporary poets, the kinds of verbal textures and angles of vision that excite each one in turn. Each pays homage to that element in Robert Frost which perhaps best limns his own work.

Thus Brodsky's piece, "On Grief and Reason," dwells on the bleakness of Frost's sensibility—a focus we might expect from the late Russian poet who once defined the writing of poetry as "an exercise in dying." With nicely telling irony, Brodsky begins by analyzing the poem "Come In" and concludes with "Home Burial." The former becomes for him a "humble footnote or postscript" to Dante's *Commedia*, a "stylistic choice in ruling out a major form," as the poem's speaker doubly refuses the invitation:

> Far in the pillared dark
> Thrush music went—
> Almost like a call to come in

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To the dark and lament.
But no, I was out for stars:
I would not come in.
I meant not even if asked,
And I hadn't been.

Such poems, Brodsky points out, are full of set-ups, what Walcott calls "traps." In "Home Burial" the husband mounts the stairs to answer for himself what he has asked his wife: "She let him look, sure that he wouldn't see, / Blind creature; and awhile he didn't see. / But at last he murmured, 'Oh,' and again, 'Oh.'" Of course, as Brodsky points out, several more lines of this couple's dialogue will pass before the reader discovers what there is to see out that window. The tension, the low simmering suspense in the characters' words and gestures, can be found in countless other Frost poems, not just the dramatic monologues or narratives. Brodsky may plead a bit too much for this poem as a retelling of the Pygmalion-Galathea myth, but such a reading has its compelling features and at any rate forces us to examine all the more closely the pair's situation.

For Seamus Heaney, Frost's poetry is a "defense against emptiness." Moving well beyond his own paraphrase of Frost's famous definition of poetry as a "momentary stay against confusion," Heaney attends to matters of form in such poems as "Desert Places" and "Birches." Both illustrate Heaney's (and Frost's) distinction between craft and technique, between what can be picked up or learned about making verse and what is somehow intrinsically a function of one's own voice, one's stance or attitude toward life. Heaney plainly admires Frost's ability to create the "slippage toward panic" in the opening cadences of "Desert Places" and the "airy vernal daring" of "Birches." At such moments, Heaney's commentary actually assists—as literary criticism was surely meant to—the effect of the poem under discussion. The poem, Heaney says, is an "emotional occurrence, yet it is preeminently a rhythmic one, an animation via the ear of the whole nervous apparatus."

"The Road Taken," Derek Walcott's contribution to the volume, originally appeared as a review of the 1995 Library of America edition of the *Collected Poems, Prose, & Plays*. For this reason, the essay ranges a bit wider than either Brodsky's or Heaney's, while losing nothing of their directness and acuity. Walcott's assessment could well be subtitled "Frost the Modernist," placing the poet's innovations with "sentence sounds" among the experiments of William Carlos Williams and e.e. cummings. We are reminded that Pound and Yeats approved of the freshness and vigor of the early poems; but Frost carried out the injunction to "make it new" without, for example, endorsing the "variable foot" or resorting to verbal pyrotechnics.

> We are amazed at the ordinariness, even the banality, of Frost's rhymes ("bird"/"heard"), at the courage, even the gall, of the poet, rubbing such worn-out coins again but somehow polishing them to a surprising sheen. This directness has danger in it. . . . But Frost's power lies in the ease with which he slides over his endings with the calm, natural authority of a wave or a gust of wind, making his rhymes, with apparent diffidence, a part of the elements, of poetry and of weather.

For this reason Frost's achievement is often undervalued or even dismissed, especially by the trendier academic critics. That three of our era's most renowned poets—Nobel Laureates all—should feel they owe to Frost such professional gratitude and appreciation should recall for us the sources of poetry's power, its movement (as Frost put it) from delight to wisdom. It should not be lost on us, either, in this age of earnest multiculturalism, that the poets gathered in *Homage to Robert Frost* hail from Russia, Ireland, and the West Indies, respectively. As Walcott writes here, a "great poem is a state of raceless, sexless, timeless grace." That we would not find such a sentiment expressed by many of our current literary critics is reason enough to read the poets instead.

James Scruton is Holmes Professor of Literature at Bethel College.

LIBERAL ARTS

DEPORTATION DUPLICITY

The Clinton administration, which likes to tout its new, stricter immigration policies and its crackdown on illegal aliens, is actually *releasing* jailed alien felons. According to an article cited in FAIR's *Immigration Report* in March, the Justice Department admits that 90 percent of released criminal aliens—who include rapists and child molesters—never show up for deportation. While Attorney General Janet Reno says there simply is not enough jail space for all the convicted aliens, Neil Jacobs of the Dallas INS office reports that there are at least 500 vacant holding spaces in his area and about 22,000 nationwide.

The Clinton administration is also aiding efforts by the American Immigration Lawyers Association to block deportations of illegal aliens. The administration and the AILA have tried to persuade the Supreme Court that last year's immigration law permits judges only to *recommend*, not to order, deportation.

Paint It Black

by J.O. Tate

Somewhere in the Night: Film Noir and the American City
by Nicholas Christopher
New York: Free Press;
290 pp., $25.00

◆

If you live long enough junk becomes antiques, and cast-offs are classics. It's pleasant to think that the popular culture of only a few decades ago is now revered, but it's also scary. A recent visit to a clothing store flashing lime-green and neon-yellow polyester revivals of the 70's was enough to remind me that not everything passé deserves recycling.

But some things do. Shakespeare himself provoked that sense in a fast-changing England over 300 years ago. And there have been times in our violent century when people knew they had experienced a creation that would outlive its time. I experienced that phenomenon myself 40-odd years ago. More importantly, I learned about it from members of the previous generation. I was impressed when veterans of combat took certain books and music

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and movies seriously, and I still am. What we call "film noir" was in effect made for those veterans to watch; in fact, it was, often enough, about veterans returning to a corrupted civilian life.

Of course, they didn't (we didn't) call it "film noir" then. They called it good stuff. You recognized it for its refusal of smarm, its gritty exception to the slick, even feminized corporatism inundating America which would be perfected later on in Bill Clinton's public weeping. What we call "film noir" were some of the jewels among the cheap pictures. They got no respect except from the thousands who loved them.

In a sense, film noir meant men's movies. They were violent and bleak and grim and people died at the end. The dark melodrama was where tragedy went to die. The femme fatale was familiar, not so much as a come-on but as an agent of doom related to Clytemnestra and Lady Macbeth. (Lady Macbeth's brilliant aplomb in handling embarrassment in the banquet scene makes her the Miss Manners, if not the Martha Stewart, of her day.) To the veterans (as to all alert citizens) it did not seem strange to see a man pulling a .38 out of his jacket, nor did it seem bizarre to think that the "establishment" was corrupt, wired by the mob. The veterans had been required to kill for peace, and then to shut up and not expose all the lies when they got home.

So much for the audience. The makers of the films noirs were from everywhere, many of them European craftsmen such as John Alton of Hungary who was the greatest cinematographer of film noir. The sensibility of the films was precipitated by the tough guy writers of the 30's, and in Faulkner and Hemingway in the 20's. The French, responding first to the film noir cycle, gave it its name, making some of us feel a bit like the fellow in Molière who learned that he had been speaking prose all his life. *Merci beaucoup, mes amis.*

All of which brings us to the immediate occasion, Nicholas Christopher's new book on film noir. He begins with a memory of a Parisian theater in 1973, watching *Out of the Past* (1947), one of the greatest of its kind. Analyzing that film and appreciating its subversive darkness and outrageous form leads him through the cycle of film noir and on to a late neo-noir such as *The Usual Suspects* (1995).

Nicholas Christopher is a poet and a novelist who knows what it means to follow a vision, to dwell on an image. He never backs off from tracing the implications of film noir, relating the dark visions to recent American history, the postwar boom, the Bomb, the Cold War, McCarthyism, and all the rest of them. His most striking virtue, I think, is his passionate response to provocative material, his openness to cinematic experience. He manages to deal with the films in an informed voice, but without a professorial tone. He excels at conveying the outrageousness of what he describes, incisively defamiliarizing what we remember all too well, and what still plays routinely on cable.

Sometimes there are flaws in his emphases, or slight errors or other problems.

Such as the exasperating sentence-fragment/paragraph.

But otherwise *Somewhere in the Night* is exciting, informative, and, I think, the best introduction to its topic. The other essential books on film noir are academic and encyclopedic, serving another purpose. Silver and Ward's *Film Noir: An Encyclopedic Reference to the American Style* (1979; third edition 1992) and Spenser Selby's *Dark City: The Film Noir* (1984) are the best of the others, if you discount Borde and Chaumenton's *Panorama du Film Noir Americain (1941-53)* (1955).

Need I add that on that putative shelf there ought also to be a host of those indispensable films that remain America's gifts to the world? Some of the film noirs rank with the greatest productions of world cinema. *Double Indemnity* (1944), *Gilda* (1946), *The Killers* (1946), *Out of the Past* (1947), *Criss Cross* (1949), *D.O.A.* (1950), *Gun Crazy* (1950), *Strangers on a Train* (1951), *Kiss Me Deadly* (1955), *Touch of Evil* (1958), and probably 50 more, plus perhaps ten outstanding neo-noirs in the last 30 years, are all films that everyone should know. Once seen they cannot be forgotten, nor can their icons. Richard Widmark, Robert Mitchum, Dan Duryea, Elisha Cook, Jr., and all the rest of the usual suspects constitute what we can now see—what Christopher helps us to see—as a pantheon of the modern imagination. After all, the hero had always died and gone to Hell, but never before so insistently to get out of the other hell that is the postwar American city.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

***The Stance Of Atlas* by Peter F. Erickson examines the philosophy of Ayn Rand.**

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Ayn Rand's epistemological and metaphysical teachings are subjected to extensive criticism. Her attempt to solve the problem of universals is shown to be a failure. *The Stance Of Atlas* actually provides the correct solution. She believed, incorrectly, that Objectivism has the key to answering the problem of induction. *The Stance Of Atlas* shows that this problem was basically solved by a forgotten English logician early in this century. Contrary to Rand's Objectivism, it is established that reason is open to the possibility of God's existence.

Ayn Rand's attempt to found a new morality is shown to be less than what she took it to be. The defense of fractional reserve banking made by Alan Greenspan in Rand's book on capitalism is refuted. Other important issues are discussed.

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by Samuel Francis

Impeachable Offenses

Back in March, Republican Majority Whip Tom DeLay took lunch at the *Washington Times* and started jabbering about how he and his party were going to impeach "activist judges" who handed down improper rulings. I know something about how those luncheons at the *Times* work, so I was not as impressed as some people. First, the guest is taken to the editor-in-chief's office and offered a drink or two. Then at table he is kept talking and prevented from swallowing any solid food, all the while being plied with more potables and lots of questions from the reporters present. By the end of the session, the guest—usually an officeholder and often a congressman or Cabinet member—is lucky if he hasn't threatened to nuke Massachusetts and defund Arlington Cemetery, but the hapless celebrity finds himself and his remarks plastered all over the front page of the next day's edition, while his press aides scurry to explain what he really said and what he really meant.

In Mr. DeLay's case, there was no reason to retract or explain, and indeed his fellow congresspersons in the Stupid Party found his proposals exhilarating. A day or so later, the news was full of stories about how the Republicans were going to take back the Constitution and decorate the public lamp posts with the corpses of judges. "They loved it," spouted the Majority Whip of his colleagues' response to his proposals, "they think I'm a god on this one." The Texas lawmaker then boasted of how he was even drawing up plans for the mass bloodletting to be submitted to the grand inquisitor himself, Speaker Gingrich.

It is always dangerous when Republicans start thinking about the Constitution. If history tells us anything, it shows that from the blatantly illegal passage of the 14th Amendment in 1866 down to Dwight Eisenhower's appointment of Earl Warren and William Brennan to the Supreme Court, the Republican Party has been the major enemy of constitutional government. There have indeed been Republicans who knew something about constitutional law—Senator Robert Taft, for example, as well as Barry Goldwater and my late employer John East—but for the most part, congressional pressures for preserving the integrity of the Constitution have sprouted in Democratic bosoms—notably Southerners like Richard Russell of Georgia, Harry Byrd of West Virginia, Sam Ervin of North Carolina, and James Allen of Alabama, to name but a few. Even the immense damage inflicted on the Constitution by the judges and justices appointed by Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt could have been corrected had it not been for the insistence of the Republicans who perpetuated their follies by their own appointments to the bench.

The Reagan and Bush eras proved this rule. By the time President Bush left office in 1993, all but two of the nine justices of the Supreme Court had been appointed by Republican Presidents, and one would have thought that the collective judicial appointments to the federal bench by Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and Bush might have made some difference in the kind of court decisions the Solomons hand down. But the truth is, it made no difference at all. The most controversial, divisive, and damaging court decisions in American history—those of the Warren and Burger courts—were the products of mainly Republican appointments, and without their contributions to jurisprudence, the rest of the country would not have had to endure the effects of forced school desegregation, the legalization of pornography, the destruction of criminal law, and the creation of abortion as a "human right."

Recent Republican ventures into constitutionalism continue this pattern. Ever since the Republicans won a congressional majority in 1994, they have unveiled one ill-considered constitutional amendment after another—the School Prayer Amendment, the Flag Amendment, the Term Limits Amendment, the Human Life Amendment, the Religious Freedom Amendment, and the Balanced Budget Amendment. Almost all of these measures are carelessly drafted, intended more to assuage the pet peeves of their conservative constituencies than to provide clear guidance as to what lawmakers may or may not do, and none of them speaks to the fundamental flaws that the courts have imported into the Constitution over the last half century and more. For all the ballyhoo about the Tenth Amendment and states' rights that Republican gurus have spewed forth in recent years, not a single serious effort has been made to restore real federalism. Not a single serious effort has been made to curb the "imperial presidency" that Taft and Goldwater warned about in the 1950's or that conservative theorists like James Burnham, Willmoore Kendall, and Russell Kirk criticized long before Richard Nixon's experiments in presidential Caesarism excited the envy of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Not a single serious effort has been made to reverse the principal Big Lie of 20th-century jurisprudence, the Incorporation Doctrine, under which the courts may strike down virtually any state or local law that displeases them. If there is a single Republican congressman today who understands these principles and even entertains the notion of restoring them, I am unable to tell who he might be, nor do the "theorists" who discourse on constitutionalism in today's conservative circles show much grasp of them either.

The main such theorist, of course, is Robert Bork, who does know a bit about the Constitution and who would like to do something to salvage it. But even Judge Bork flops and flails when it comes to doing the right thing. In his book *The Tempting of America*, written after the defeat of his nomination to the Supreme Court by President Reagan, he dismisses any notion of reversing the Incorporation Doctrine. "The controversy over the legitimacy of incorporation continues to this day," he writes, "although as a matter of judicial practice the issue is settled." In his more recent book, he is equally dismissive of the Second Amendment. "The Supreme Court has consistently ruled that there is no individual right to own a firearm," he writes erroneously. "The Second Amendment was designed to allow states to defend themselves against a possibly tyrannical national government. Now that the federal government has stealth bombers and nuclear weapons, it is hard to imagine what people would need to keep in

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the garage to serve that purpose." Even if we grant Judge Bork's military expertise, it does not follow that because the original purpose of an explicit right is obsolete, the right itself no longer exists. The Court ruled in the Miller decision of 1939 that certain weapons, like sawed-off shotguns, were not covered by the Second Amendment because they were not useful in warfare (it was wrong on that too, since sawed-off shotguns have been used in warfare, especially trench warfare), but it has never held that "there is no individual right to own a firearm." Had it done so, there would be no legal firearms in the country today.

Judge Bork's remedy for the courts is simply to abolish judicial independence by allowing Congress to overrule by majority vote any court decision it dislikes. Not only would his proposal not correct constitutional mechanisms, it would effectively exterminate any pretense that the rule of law, independent of the lawmakers, is even what is supposed to govern the country. At least, however, Judge Bork is willing to entertain radical measures, unlike some of his neoconservative critics. Bill Kristol has remarked that what's wrong with Judge Bork is that "he makes it seem that only an extreme measure would do any good." No, what's wrong with Judge Bork is that his particular extreme measure would do no good, not that no extreme measure would do any good.

Given the ignorance, opportunism, and cowardice of congressional Republicans and the uselessness of such mentors as Judge Bork, then, it was hardly surprising that Mr. DeLay's plans for stringing up the judges soon came to naught. Whatever Mr. Gingrich thought about those plans when his lieutenant submitted them, it was left to the Majority Leader of the Senate to disillusion Mr. DeLay that the Republicans were really serious about restoring the Constitution. Only a few days after Mr. DeLay had laid out his grand strategy, Trent Lott let the air out of the impeachment tire. "I don't think there is going to be a plan to look at [impeachment] as a way to express our opinion on their rulings," said the Mississippi senator. Only a judge's committing a crime would interest him and the Senate in impeachment, and the DeLay plan died a quick and quiet death.

Mr. Lott was probably right. In the first place, precisely because most Republicans are not serious about constitutionalism, it was always unlikely the party would proceed with the tribunals Mr. DeLay contemplated. Secondly, impeachment, as anyone who knows a bit about its historical origins and use in British history can tell you, is a dangerous game. Whoever starts it seldom finishes it, and the annals of England are drenched in the blood of ministers who were impeached by the House of Commons simply for their political actions. There is no reason why the Democrats could not use the impeachment sword against those judges and other officeholders they dislike as much as the Republicans can, and my bet is that the Democrats would play the game a bit more skillfully than their rivals. Finally, there is the issue of whether it is really right to impeach judges just because of their rulings. Mr. Lott is correct that the Constitution does not seem to provide for that, saying only that impeachment shall be for "high crimes and misdemeanors," but it can be argued that this language does allow for the impeachment of officials for noncriminal conduct (if, indeed, that is an accurate description of concerted efforts to subvert the Constitution). In any case, without Mr. Lott's support and that of the senatorial myrmidons he commands, there would be no purpose in the House impeaching anyone, so the DeLay scheme seems to have died aborning.

Of course, if the Republicans really were serious about restoring the Constitution or controlling a judiciary that has escaped all bonds of law and rationality, they would not have to resort to measures as drastic or as disturbing to Bill Kristol as impeachment or even amendment. Article II, section two of the Constitution gives Congress authority to regulate the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, and the Court itself has acknowledged this authority in the 1868 ruling Ex parte McCardle. All the majority of the Congress has to do is enact a law (or several) stating that the Court shall have no jurisdiction in whatever kinds of cases the majority doesn't want it to have jurisdiction over: abortion, sexual morality, national security, burning the flag, obscenity, or even any case arising from a state or local law. With one stroke, the Congress could wipe out the Incorporation Doctrine and effectively restore the Constitution to life.

That the Republicans do not seriously (or even unseriously) propose that, rather than tinker with silly amendments that will never pass anyway or mutter idle threats to impeach judges that can't be fulfilled, ought to tell us something not only about the Republicans but the nature of law itself. "Law follows power," wrote Kevin Phillips some years ago, and while he is hardly the only person to make that observation, he puts it as succinctly as it can be put. Human law is a fiction agreed upon, and the laws that govern human communities are always merely reflections of the elites in power and their interests and values. The alteration of the Constitution from a document ruling a decentralized republic of self-governing citizens into one authorizing the construction of a centralized, bureaucratic leviathan is an integral part of what James Burnham called the managerial revolution, the historical process by which law is replaced by administrative decree, federalism is replaced by executive autocracy, and a limited government replaced by an unlimited state. The distortion of the Constitution, in other words, is not merely the product of a handful of ignoramuses who have warmed their hindquarters on the benches of the courts but of a complex and protracted displacement of one ruling class by another. Because the revolution in this country happened to take place "within the form," as Garet Garrett called it, it was necessary to adapt the Constitution and existing political institutions to the needs of the revolution and the new elites that it brought to power, rather than simply junk it and start over.

The new managerial elites needed the centralization, uniformity, and power that the courts readily gave them and which the old Constitution did not allow them to have, and the Republican Party, at least as much as its rival, was eager and willing to help them out. It should not, therefore, be too surprising that Republican blather about restoring the old Constitution, the old federalism, and the old Republic is not to be taken seriously or that whenever some harmless drudge like Mr. DeLay has one drink too many and starts babbling about getting serious, his superiors in the party at once explain to a patient press and public that they have no intention of doing what he suggests. In the effort to restore life to the Constitution, as in so many similar efforts, Americans who are serious will have to look beyond the Republican Party and the leviathan that the party has helped create.

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Letter From Inner Israel

by Jacob Neusner

Continental Judaism, R.I.P.

◆

Religions may explode in human history—Christianity conquering Rome in scarcely 300 years, Islam the Mediterranean basin in scarcely a century. But they die only here and there, only now and then, and renew themselves in times and circumstances none can predict. God has a good sense of humor and a still better understanding of ourselves than we can hope to have. Spending last Purim (March 22) in Prague gave me good reason to think about what happens when a religion dies, as Judaism has died or is dying, not for demographic but for religious reasons, in Prague and in most of continental Europe, including all of Scandinavia, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Low Countries—everywhere except for Britain and France.

Who killed continental Judaism? Hitler did much of the work, Stalin finished the job (with—among many others—his willing Jewish-communist collaborators). Judaism flourishes in many forms and in many places, but one of the enduring legacies of Nazism and communism is the utter death of Judaism in most of continental Europe. Apart from France and Britain—the one community rebuilt after the Algerian conflict by French-speaking, highly educated, Jews from Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco; the other untouched by Hitler or Stalin—no Jewish community in continental Europe preserves and practices Judaism in a manner appropriate to that religion's teachings. Having lectured under university and Jewish auspices from Madrid to Helsinki, Rome to Stockholm, Utrecht and Antwerp to Prague, and everywhere in between, I know whereof I speak.

What makes me wonder whether the religion, Judaism, finds practitioners in the lands occupied by the Germans in World War II and especially in the lands ruined by the Russians afterward? Take three norms of the faith. First comes hospitality to strangers, which the Talmud values in the tradition of Abraham and the angels. Second comes study of the Torah, which according to the tractate of the Mishnah called "the Fathers" man is created to do. Third comes prayer and respect for the act of prayer: in many synagogues "know before whom you stand" is written above the ark containing the Torah-scrolls.

The ferocious inhospitality of continental European synagogues (again: except the British and the French, and in some places, Stockholm and Berlin for instance) is famous in the Jewish world. Everybody knows the story. It is not the necessity of armed guards to protect the worshipers from Arab bullets and bombs, but the incapacity of local Jews even to greet new faces in attendance. Continental European Jews serve large helpings of cold shoulder. Whether in Frankfurt or in Berlin or Prague or Madrid or Helsinki, neither clergy nor laity greets strangers in any way, except with scowls and turned backs.

What about Torah study? Not marked by learning or interest, continental Jewry is wholly unable to participate in the study of the sacred books, exhibiting a complete indifference to the academic presentation of these books for a world of cultured people. One cannot point to a single intellectually distinguished rabbi in all of continental Europe (with the repeated exceptions), and most of the scholarship on Judaism that is published comes from Gentiles. Europe is populated by Chief Rabbis, not one of whom (outside of Britain or France) enjoys moral authority or even pretends to the dignity of learning. All of them impress by their ferocious condemnation of everyone beyond their range of vision and uncomprehending rejection of any idea they did not invent, of which, in fact, there is none.

I state very simply that the rabbinate of continental Europe is the first large rabbinate in the history of Judaism that utterly lacks learning, except perhaps in the technicalities of worship and the slaughter of chickens. As for hospitality, I know from personal experience: when I attended the World Congress of Families organized by The Rockford Institute in Prague last March, and my wife and I wanted to attend the Purim worship at the principal synagogue there, we were turned away at the door; foreigners are not wanted. We could not perform our religious obligation of hearing the scroll of Esther read: we were Americans and therefore excluded. We could go to the second floor, in the same community center, where an American Conservative rabbi explained the scroll of Esther but was not allowed by the local rabbi (a convert to Judaism) to read it from start to finish. This would not fulfill our religious duty.

But the conduct of people at worship speaks eloquently about the state of their faith in prayer, and it suffices to say, from the evidence of how they behaved, that they believe nothing. Some examples: in Madrid, on a Sabbath morning, when my family attended the public proclamation of the Torah-lection for the Sabbath, people surrounding the lectern engaged in conversations throughout the scriptural lesson, except for those engaged in reading the morning papers. In Abo, Finland, the week after Passover some years back, the Orthodox synagogue there decided not to take the sacred scrolls out of the ark and read them, the responsible person being too tired to bother to learn the passage; but it is principally to hear the Torah declaimed that one bears the obligation of attending public worship at all. Everything else is a detail. In Prague on the festival of Purim, people attending the public reading of the scroll of Esther simply walked out in the middle of the reading, leaving not in ones and twos but in fives and tens, exiting from a small room the only way they could, which was to walk within three feet of the rabbi as he read from the scroll. So far as I could tell, they were not even embarrassed.

There is not a single Orthodox, Reform, or Conservative synagogue in the State of Israel where such conduct would

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be tolerated, nor in Britain, nor at least for Reform and Conservative Judaisms in the United States and Canada. Here the Rabbinate enjoys sufficient respect to establish order, and except for some rather degraded Orthodox synagogues that lack all self-respect and decorum, the behavior commonplace in European synagogues at the hour of prayer is simply astounding. It is repulsive and anti-Judaic.

Where do people learn such incivility? It stems from what they have never seen, which is piety in practice. To this they are tone-deaf and utterly dumb. I recall seeing similar behavior in Providence, Rhode Island, some years ago: guests at a bar mitzvah turning the entire worship service of a Reform Temple into a photo opportunity, walking up and down the aisles, greeting one another and taking photographs through the service, standing along the sides and on chairs for better shots, and, in all, behaving like barbarians. At the time I asked myself, "Where did these people, so totally indifferent to the circumstance of addressing God, come from?" The answer was, they all came from Russia. These were among the earliest Russian Jews to come to the United States; they simply had never attended a synagogue before. They did not know what happens there, and they did not believe anything does. They did not know how to behave properly, and they did not observe the conduct of others.

In Prague, too, the Jews I observed at the service I attended simply had no idea of what was going on, though matters were presented deftly and charmingly by an American rabbi of enormous gifts, Arnold Turetsky of White Plains. A man sitting next to me looked simply out of place and miserable. I got him a copy of the scroll of Esther in Hebrew, showed him the spot, with no response; then I did the same (as best I could) in Czech translation, still nothing. He glanced at neither. He just sat there looking uncomfortable, until he left in the first of several mass exoduses. I wondered why he came only to walk out without participating. When I asked the rabbi to explain the mentality that animates that kind of behavior, he had no answer; it is something he had never seen in White Plains. I asked the synagogue president, an American in law practice in Prague, what he thought; he had no answer.

But I think I know the answer. Nazi Germany destroyed lives, Soviet communism destroyed souls. The Germans before and during World War II destroyed millions of lives. The greatest body of faithful Jews in the world died in the holocaust. The massive system of schools, with their teachers and students, mainly perished (a few were able to escape and reconstruct themselves in the United States or in Israel). The thousands of synagogues, with their millions of worshipers for Sabbaths and festivals and weekdays, were destroyed by the Germans or closed by the Russians. The communists destroyed the souls of the survivors within their power. The survivors who could escape in the main turned their backs on Europe, finding refuge and hope in Israel, America, and elsewhere.

Those who survived in Russia, Czechoslovakia, and other parts of the Soviet Empire found themselves cut off from the religion, Judaism. Not only have they endured three generations of atheist teaching, but 70 years of isolation from the practice of Judaism. They had few synagogues, and attending worship could cost a career or worse; they had no schools; they lost such models of piety and faith as had survived the Bolshevik catastrophe. A Jewish community that does not educate its own rabbis cannot endure—and should not.

When a revival of Jewish life began in the 1970's, it took the form of the study of the Hebrew language and the affirmation of Zionism: "Free Soviet Jewry" meant "Let them go." But the religion, Judaism, cannot speak through slogans or be realized through political action. We who practice Judaism—study the Torah, say our prayers, keep the Commandments—do not attend rallies and sign petitions; we offer prayers and petition God. Judaism—which calls itself the Torah—speaks of matters other than the political and the ethnic. It talks of God wanting our love and His giving of the Torah to purify our hearts. It speaks of a holy people, a pilgrim people, making their way through time to God's planned destiny for them. It demands a way of life that sanctifies the everyday, a worldview that endows happenstance with meaning and event with the promise of salvation. Of none of this did Jews under communism know. And now, so it appears, it is too late to learn; the great chain of tradition is broken. Where the tradition flourishes—in Britain, France, the United States, and Israel—the orphans of communism can observe and find a place for themselves. But in places like Prague, prayer without soul and learning without commitment yield a farce, a charade, an offense against Heaven. God is not fooled.

Jacob Neusner is Distinguished Research Professor of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida and a professor of religion at Bard College.

Letter From Lima

by Steven Greenhut

HUD Strikes Again

◆

It may not be the start of the Great Middle American Revolution, but the reaction of residents in Lima, Ohio, to a heavy-handed public housing plan shows that some Americans are still willing to stand up for their communities. A declining industrial city of 45,000, Lima has seen its share of hard times in recent years. In the city's south side are hundreds of acres of rotting industrial hulks where steel was forged and locomotives were built. Lima has lost several thousand jobs in the past few years, and now British Petroleum has announced the closing of its refinery, which employs 470 workers.

To add insult to injury, the county's Metropolitan Housing Authority (an agency funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development) has announced plans to build 28 new housing units throughout Lima's dwindling middle- and working-class neighborhoods. The last time Met Housing, as it is unaffectionately called, did its handiwork, it built scores of ranch houses that have the architectural finesse of bomb shelters. They were plopped like brick elephants in some of Lima's finest older neighborhoods.

Combined with its inept management of the federal Section 8 program, which subsidizes low-income tenants in privately owned homes, Met Housing has turned many stable, well-kept neighborhoods into enclaves of run-down rental housing. It is no surprise that

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more than half of the city's houses are now rental units and that Lima often tops those national rankings of affordable housing.

In typical bureaucratic fashion, agency officials never bothered to tell the community about their plans. The mayor, a liberal Democrat who was a public housing bureaucrat before being elected to his post, did not see any reason to raise this "divisive" issue, either. (As his top community development official told me, people in the community are not capable of having a rational discussion about such matters.)

After the *Lima News* reported about the plan in early January, residents simmered with anger. They knew from past experience that Met houses brought a wave of crime, drugs, and lower-class culture onto their blocks. And they bitterly resented the fact that the agency was spending $96,000 per home for welfare moms in a city where a typical house costs about $50,000. But there was also a sense of resignation—and fear. More than a few residents told me about the threats and harassment they endured from Met Housing tenants after they filed a complaint with the housing agency.

The policies imposed on Lima are the same ones the feds are inflicting on cities throughout the country. We know what happened after HUD built those dehumanizing housing complexes in big cities across America in the 1960's. Instead of providing affordable housing for America's poor, HUD-funded apartment blocks turned into some of the nation's most dangerous places.

Never let it be said that bureaucrats are deterred by ignominious failure. HUD's new plan is to scatter low-income tenants throughout middle-class neighborhoods so the underclass won't be isolated in public housing ghettos. In other words, if the "racist" and "class-conscious" middle class won't move to the inner city, the feds will move the inner city to the middle class.

The encouraging news is that after the *Lima News* ran a series of columns that raised these points, residents began to speak out and city councilmembers moved the issue to the top of their agenda. The response by the agency was swift and furious. Model public housing tenants were trotted out to show the life-changing results of the agency's programs. The local code czar claimed there are no more problems at Met properties than any other properties (she conveniently neglected to check police logs filled with calls relating to Met-owned properties). Met Housing supporters castigated agency opponents as mean-spirited racists.

This paragraph that I wrote in a bylined column came under heavy fire:

> We're assured that, this time, the house designs will be more sensitive to their surroundings. I'm more concerned, however, about who lives inside the houses than what they look like from the outside. People who work hard and invest their hard-earned cash in a house tend to make better neighbors than government dependents.

But instead of running for cover, two city councilmembers publicly supported my column, and scores of residents wrote favorable letters to the editor. After the ensuing debate, the council voted 7-2 to declare a moratorium on the building of the 28 houses until a study is done to document its impact on neighborhoods.

The vote was largely symbolic. The agency is accountable to a local board conveniently stacked with public housing cheerleaders and to federal officials in Columbus and Washington. When the agency, as expected, ignored the council's vote, the council refused to back down. The council is now seeking an injunction to stop the project after learning that the agency ignored an Ohio law requiring it to gain approval from the county planning commission before proceeding with construction. In response, HUD sent an attorney from Columbus to bully the city into dropping its resistance. "The federal government is saying, 'If you don't let MHA break the law, then we will cut off CDBG [community development block grants] funds,'" one councilmember said. "If the federal government withholds funds, then we need to sue them for violating the law as well."

The Lima City Council voted 7-2 to proceed with the lawsuit after members pointedly said that HUD could keep its block grants. Only at this point did HUD and Met Housing agree to a public meeting to discuss the scattered-site plan. Despite their efforts to stack the meeting with pro-public housing advocates, angry residents showed up in droves and documented the damage Met Housing policies have inflicted on their neighborhoods.

No one in Lima is entertaining serious hopes about stopping the agency's latest folly. But we have stirred a much-needed debate, annoyed some overpaid bureaucrats, and proved that charges of racism and heartlessness do not always carry the day. That may be a modest achievement, but it could be a first step toward taking back our city from an arrogant elite.

Steven Greenhut is editorial-page editor of the Lima News *in Ohio.*

Letter From London

by Derek Turner

Allah in Piccadilly

"The retrogressive tendencies of the masses were invariably reinforced by the periodic invasions of aliens who had no respect for official deities or temple creeds."

—Donald A. McKenzie,
Myths of Babylonia and Assyria

◆

Just over a year after the opening of a vast, phantasmagorical Hindu temple in Neasden, north London, has come news that Britain's Muslims are flexing their muscles again. "Muslims planning 100 new mosques by millennium" ran the portentous headline in the *Daily Telegraph* on February 3. Although some of these mosques are still at planning permission stage, the various architects all sound confident that obtaining the permission will be a mere formality in almost all cases. This means that 100 or so new mosque buildings (they are not all new mosques, as some are merely replacing old, unsuitable mosque buildings) will soon be arising to change Britain's urban skylines. All will be built according to the classic Muslim pattern, with a central dome and minarets, and separate entrances for men and women. Some have already arisen, like the Bilal Masjid mosque in Harehills Lane, Leeds, which is almost complete. "If you stand in

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front of the Bilal mosque and blink, you would think you were in the Middle East" rejoiced the architect, who is of Iraqi extraction.

All the new mosques are necessary because of all the people of differing, sometimes mutually antipathetic, Muslim traditions who are now living in Britain. There will be separate mosques built for Bangladeshi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Pathan, Turkish, and Mauritian Muslims, and at least one built for a heretical sect, the Ahmadiyas, in a disused dairy in Merton, south London, once more famous for its Augustinian foundation of Merton Abbey, founded in 1114, where Thomas à Becket and the founder of Merton College, Oxford, were both educated, and where the Statute of Merton, the oldest on record, was enacted in 1236. (Most of the Abbey is now under a car park.) While all these projects are going on, extension or refurbishment will be taking place at 160 other mosques across the country. Not to be outdone by all the Hindu statues bleeding milk in London's Hindu temples, Allah is now autographing the inside of aubergines (eggplants), according to a recent news report from what is now the heavily Islamized Yorkshire town of Bradford.

Compared to these signs of life, Christianity seems to be stagnant. Church of England membership is only 40 percent of what it was in the 1930's, and the number of Sunday worshipers has dropped from 1.6 million in 1968 to 1.1 million in 1992 (*Daily Telegraph*, October 30, 1996). Over the last 25 years, 350 Anglican churches have closed for good (out of 16,000), although there has actually been a slight increase in the number of Roman Catholic churches over the same period (four in 1994-95, to bring the figure to 3,760). The Greek and Eastern Orthodox congregations are standing still, and there are slight increases in the numbers of Jehovah's Witnesses, who find recruits in the ranks of upper-working-class people anxious for respectability, but none too discerning theologically. Part of this is merely a natural side-effect of the general aging of Britain's population, but it still seems a little incongruous in the country which produced Milton, Bunyan, and Hopkins—the country of which Dean Inge could say in *The English Genius* as recently as 1939, "Christianity is, I think, stronger in Great Britain than in any other European country."

The decline of Anglicanism should be viewed with trepidation because of its status as the Established Church. Although it would be an overstatement to say that Anglicanism *is* England, it is not overstating the case to say that the disestablishment of Anglicanism, which is increasingly likely to happen, would mean enormous upheaval. A further reason why conservatives should lament the passing of Anglicanism is that it is, or was, a conservative faith, which was relatively rational, where mysticism and dogmatism were kept in check, which inculcated the national values of moderation and good sense, and whose vicars tended to live modest and useful lives (a good example is that of Gilbert White of Selborne).

If ex-Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie is to be believed, the reason for the decline in church attendance lies in Anglicanism's neglect of tradition and its heritage in favor of what he called "happy-clappy" services, involving "speaking in tongues," playing guitars, dancing, and the like. One can see why the evangelists are considered revolting (one modern hymn for schoolchildren boasts the couplet, "He gave me lips / To eat my chips"), but the uncomfortable fact is that it is the evangelists who are the most fervent churchgoers and the strongest conservative force in the Church of England today. It is largely the unintellectual "happy clappies" who fill the pews every Sunday, and run the various pro-family movements—although similar evangelists, full of egalitarian erethism, form the backbone of the Labour Party. Not for nothing has it been said that the Labour Party is where Marxism meets Methodism.

Anglicanism is the product of an uneasy compromise between two equally English traditions—that of the harsh, judgmental, democratic Dissenter and that of the articulate, elitist, rational, effete, often camp aficionados of what are jocularly called "smells and bells." This alliance reached its apogee in the 18th century, when British Christendom was united against "Johnny Frenchman" and his Jesuitic plots. Since the last war, however, the Low Churchers have been getting the upper hand, as their rough equality is more suitable to an anti-elitist world. High Church conservatives, such as those who parade yearly at the shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk (where they are barracked by black-clad nonconformists anxious about Popish plots), the Forward in Faith movement, which campaigned against priestesses, and individuals like Digby Anderson of the Social Affairs Unit and Roger Scruton of the *Salisbury Review* are a very small minority. If it were not for the Catholic ban on married clergy, vestigial distrust of Romanism, and the aesthetic satisfaction provided by churches like the famous All Saints on Margaret Street, there would be no High Church conservatives at all. Many who would have been High Church conservatives in another age have arrived at their logical conclusions, and converted to Catholicism, entranced equally by the intellectual respectability and the romance of a Church where there are "statues . . . who can bleed, speak, walk and cry," as Thackeray's Henry Esmond exclaimed.

"All religions die of one disease, that of being found out," I remember reading somewhere. Anglicanism, antimystical and never strong on theology, is rationalizing itself out of existence, leaving Anglicans to flounder in a morass of relativism, where every faith is considered of equal value, and even rites which might bind the present Church to its own past are discouraged. Anglicans, who are too well-educated to believe in anything supernatural but not well-educated enough to believe all over again, are vulnerable to fundamentalists because they don't understand the primitive fundamentalist mind. Anglicans need to unite once again—if unity can be regained now—repair their Anglican temples, and reinstall England's official deities.

Derek Turner is the editor of Right Now!, *published in London.*

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Letter From Pittsburgh

by Sarah McCarthy

The Mood Disorder Clinic

A poem with a vivid title has started a brouhaha at the Mood Disorder Clinic at Western Psychiatric in Pittsburgh. "Nigger Do Not Speed In My Town" was discovered on a desk by two black employees who reported it to the EEOC as evidence of a racist environment at the Mood Disorder Clinic. The offended employees said their own moods were seriously jeopardized by the incendiary poem found on the desk of a white administrative secretary who was being paid $50 per hour by a personal friend to type and proofread it for future publication.

Following an internal investigation, officials of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center discovered that the author of the poem is a local black poet, Michael Robinson, who wrote it as an angry response to the beating of Rodney King. The poem that Robinson had written and asked his friend to type was critical social commentary about the behavior of white police in Los Angeles. Robinson is baffled that his poem is being interpreted as evidence of a culture of discrimination at UPMC.

Surprise, surprise. A Pittsburgh attorney who handles workplace discrimination cases said that the author's identity in this case is irrelevant. The question, says the attorney in the *Pittsburgh Business Times*, is "whether the poem is going to be admissible as evidence to show an atmosphere. It probably would be."

The *Pittsburgh Business Times* agreed, taking a hardline position in an editorial against common sense and the First Amendment. "Even in issues as difficult as harmonious race or gender relations in the workplace," said the *Pittsburgh Business Times*, "we wonder if common sense is still the best guide. If the poem never entered the medical clinic, then the offended employees at Western Psych, regardless of the merit or lack thereof of their complaints, would not have had this incendiary example of what they believe to be UPMC's tolerance of a culture of discrimination."

Pitt's Medical Center officials replied that they cannot search employees' desks or drawers for potentially offensive materials. But, says attorney Sam Cordes, if an employer fails to take action when such material is found, that may be used as evidence to hold the employer liable in future lawsuits.

Tim Stevens, president of the Pittsburgh chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was reluctant to comment on how a black poet's poem about racism wound up as evidence in a racial discrimination case. "I am trying to be responsible about what we need to be passionate about," he told the *Pittsburgh Business Times*. "We don't need to exacerbate race relations."

Apparently, as with Humpty Dumpty, the clinic and its legions of psychiatrists couldn't put things back together again. The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center currently has about a dozen complaints of racial discrimination against it. The only sure-fire cure is to send the Mood Disorder Clinic a message. A class-action lawsuit is being discussed.

Sarah McCarthy is a freelance writer in Pittsburgh.

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GLOBALISM

George Soros, Megalomaniac

by Justin Raimondo

"It is a sort of a disease when you consider yourself some kind of god, the creator of everything," confessed George Soros to a British newspaper, "but I feel comfortable about it now since I began to live it out." Recalling youthful fantasies of omnipotence in his 1987 book *The Alchemy of Finance*, the multibillionaire speculator and global do-gooder conceded that "I carried some rather potent messianic fantasies with me from childhood, which I felt I had to control, otherwise they might get me into trouble." Now that he has the means to live out the fantasy, it is the rest of us who are in trouble.

This is no ordinary madman, but George Soros, one of the richest men in the world, and it is necessary to pay close attention. In his recent book *Soros on Soros*, the author describes his financial holdings as "truly awesome," a phrase that describes the scope of his ambition as well. Though he claims to have outgrown his delusions of divinity, his impulse to remake the world in his own image is unabated, inflated beyond reason by the absurd dimensions of his vast fortune. The result has been the rise of a new force in the world: Sorosism.

Sorosism is an international network of tax-exempt foundations, quasi-political organizations, and "independent" media churning out a great variety of *Soroscista* propaganda: arcane studies showing the need for a world central bank, a torrent of op-ed pieces calling for "peace" in Bosnia—but not before every ranking officer in the Bosnian Serb army is hanged for "war crimes." It is a coalition of lobbying groups devoted to increasing the immigrant population and mobilizing it as a political force. It is the Project on Death, a Soros creation, which seeks to transform the American "culture of death." The Soros philanthropic network is, increasingly, the backbone and chief funder of the escalating campaign to decriminalize some drugs.

Most of all, it is Soros the philosopher-king, singular in the scale of his crackbrained grandiosity, who, in expounding his theory of "reflexity," compares himself to Descartes. From deity incarnate to philosopher-king is a demotion, but one that George Soros is willing to live with. Yet he still claims to rule by divine right: when a journalist suggested that he should be elevated to the Holy See, he asked: "Why? I'm the Pope's boss now."

Soros is not kidding. The sheer scope of his many projects—from shaping the direction of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War world to reformulating the American way of death—is an agenda that not many statesmen have the resources to undertake. But Soros not only has the money, he has the will—and a growing power base among the international elites.

The myth of George Soros is that he rose from nothing to become a modern Croesus by the sweat of his brow and the audacity of his entrepreneurial spirit: a poor but brilliant Hungarian immigrant who arrived in this country in 1956 practically penniless and went on to build a financial empire. An alternative view explains his rise in terms of his connections, especially among the European super-rich whom he made even richer through his legendary ability to double and triple their investments in his Quantum Fund. Far from being a nobody when he first arrived in New York City, Soros carried with him the cachet of sophisticated European investors and exotic foreign markets. As Soros put it: "Nobody knew anything about [European securities] in the early 1960's. So I could impute any earnings I wanted to the European companies I followed. It was strictly a case of the blind leading the blind."

The secret of his success is hinted at in a biography by Robert Slater, who writes: "Soros's most distinctive feature, the trait that explained his investment talents best, was his ability to gain membership in a very exclusive 'club,' a club that included the leadership of the international financial community. No one could apply for membership in this club. Most of the participants were the political and economic leaders in rich countries: prime ministers, finance ministers, heads of central banks."

Soros was a success from the start, establishing an offshore tax haven for immensely wealthy European, Arab, and South American investors. The rule book of this exclusive club, aside from requiring a substantial minimum investment, also contained another very specific clause: no Americans allowed. Soros, who had been naturalized in the early 60's, was the only American citizen permitted to own shares.

But in what sense can Soros be considered an American, other than the strictly formal? He is, in himself, a separate nation, a transnational corporate and political entity that has no borders but only tentacles. As such, he owes no loyalty to any particular state, but only to the good of mankind—which generally seems to coincide with the good of George Soros.

What Soros called "the killing of a lifetime" came about on September 22, 1985. Treasury Secretary James Baker and the finance ministers of the major industrial countries were in secret and solemn conclave at New York City's Plaza Hotel, and were about to devalue the dollar. Soros somehow got wind of it. Working through the night, he bought yen by the barrel. As morning broke, he was $40 million richer. Central banks continued to depress the dollar, and Soros's profits on the deal eventually climbed to $150 million. His greatest coups are due just as often to his friends in Washington as to his much vaunted skill as an entrepreneur, such as when he got wind of a secret government report that predicted the oil crisis. Once again, Soros's private pipeline to inside information swelled his coffers.

In the late 1970's, Soros went through what has been described as an "identity crisis." He not only separated from his

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longtime business partner, Jim Rogers, but also from his wife, Annalise, whom he had met and married in 1961. While the pressure of his work had taken a toll on his marriage, Soros admits that "my wife had been very supportive, very tolerant of my involvement in business," and attributes the breakup to his own attitude. He describes "a rather wild period" in which he "deliberately loosened the constraints under which I had been operating." It was, he reflects, a good investment strategy: "The result was, ironically, a period of absolutely fantastic performance. We practically doubled our money in each of the next two years. The fund jumped from $100 million to almost $400 million."

Soros's concept of his divorce as an investment strategy is stunning in its utter innocence of any wrongdoing, a complete incomprehension of the repulsion this divine narcissism engenders in mere mortals. In *Soros on Soros*, he tells us he met his future wife on the day he and Annalise were legally separated. In what has got to be one of the worst pick-up lines on record, he confided to 22-year-old Susan Weber, a recent acquaintance, "I just got separated from my wife today. Would you like to have lunch?"

Soros's personal coldness permeates his philosophy. Sorosian Man is a curiously abstract, stripped-down being, devoid not only of ordinary human feeling but also of nationality. Soros, the self-proclaimed "stateless statesman," hates all nationalism, especially the American variety. Tradition and religion are evidence of "dogmatic thinking." More godlike than human, Sorosian Man has not even the fear of death. While claiming to be a disciple of the philosopher Karl Popper—whom Soros tried to interest in his ideas, without success—He Who Moves Markets is actually a nihilist who believes that "all mental constructs are flawed" and no true knowledge is ever possible. Everything is uncertain, and "the question is, can we have a set of beliefs based on the recognition that our beliefs are inherently flawed?" It is an investor's view of the world that he projects: reality, like the market, is in constant flux, unpredictable, often capricious: it is not true or false, but only up or down. Soros proposes that "we need three categories—true, false, and reflexive."

This pseudo-philosophical doubletalk is not without a point, for "then we need to revise thoroughly our view of the world." What especially needs revision is "a widespread belief that markets are perfect." While admitting that this belief is "based on the recognition that government regulations fail to fulfill their objective," that is not the whole truth: "If you introduce a third category of truth, the reflexive, it becomes apparent that the failure of regulation does not mean that free markets are perfect and vice versa. Both arrangements are flawed and the choice between them is reflexive."

Soros theorizes that in the market for ideas, as in the market for stocks and bonds, the trend-following "herd" mentality predominates. Again, Soros draws the analogy with the financial markets, and maintains that, since all markets always overcorrect, in rejecting Marxian socialism, we are now faced with the specter of an overcorrection in favor of laissez-faire.

What kind of a system would we have if Sorosian economics took hold? Apart from vague references to "social justice," we are given a concrete example in *Soros on Soros*. In answer to a question about why he changed his mind and decided to invest in Eastern European countries where his foundations have gained some influence, Soros declares that, in Russia, the situation is so desperate that "the pursuit of an abstract good like the open society hardly seems credible. I made the decision to start investing last year at the height of the robber capitalist episode. It seemed to me that to appear as a robber capitalist who is concerned with cultural and political values was more credible than to be a disembodied intellect arguing for the merits of open society. I could serve as a role model for the budding robber capitalists of Russia."

He could serve as a model for robber capitalists everywhere. For here is a man who pioneered—and greatly profited from—the financial instruments known as derivatives now declaring, in testimony before Congress, that he wants to *ban* derivatives. This is the typical pattern of robber capitalist behavior: make your bundle, and then lock out the competition.

Yet it would be a mistake to write off Sorosism as pure self-aggrandizement: he is far more ambitious than that. As he has often said, the money is just a means to an end, and Soros is busy giving it away. He spent $1.1 billion trying to usher in an "open society" in Russia and Eastern Europe. In 1995, he gave away $350 million, largely to his overseas foundations, and now has turned his sights on the West, the United States in particular. He recently pledged to devote half of his annual giving to five domestic issues: "immigrants rights," drugs, death and dying, education, and reforming the criminal justice system.

His Project on Death in America is a consortium of experts who are far too cautious to come out in favor of legalized euthanasia, although Soros says he cannot see why not. While "there is just as much death as there is sex," says Soros, the former is just not talked about.

This death fixation complements another arm of the Soros propaganda machine, and that is the fantastically successful lobby for U.S. military intervention in Bosnia. Soros is the chief financial angel of the American Committee to Save Bosnia (ACSB), the activist arm of a network that includes the Balkan Institute and the Action Council for Peace in the Balkans, whose letterhead reads like a Who's Who of all the most respectable precincts of the political spectrum: Norman Podhoretz, Richard Perle, and Jeane Kirkpatrick join hands with Hodding Carter, Henry Louis Gates, Saul Bellow, Fouad Ajami, and the omnipresent Susan Sontag in lobbying for intervention on behalf of the Bosnian Muslims. Council on Foreign Relations types such as Zbigniew Brzezinski and Frank Carlucci stand alongside celebrities Walter Cronkite and international jet-setter Bianca Jagger, in solidarity with the Iranian mullahs' European colony. Balkan Institute Executive Director Marshall Harris and Associate Director Stephen Walker are two of the three officials who quit the State Department in a huff in August 1993, because the administration wasn't hawkish enough for their tastes: they also head up the ACSB. According to Walker, the Action Council—chaired by Hodding Carter—was entirely the creation of John Fox, Soros's man in Washington. Yet Soros, the Stateless Statesman, is also faceless; his name does not appear on any of these letterheads, and Fox is similarly anonymous.

Overseas, Soros is bolder: he is not afraid to embrace Macedonian President Kiro Gligorov, a career communist bureaucrat who came up through the ranks of the Tito-era Yugoslav Communist League. Soros supports him on the grounds that he is the president of the region's only genuinely multiethnic state.

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Underscoring the depth of his support, Soros declared that he would personally travel to Macedonia and take to the hustings for Gligorov if the president's victory at the polls seemed in doubt. As it turned out, Soros need not have worried: Gligorov's neocommunist ruling party keeps a tight rein on the media, and Gligorov is widely suspected of having rigged the election.

Gligorov is in the middle of a tense standoff among Serbs, Albanians, Magyars, Greeks, and a half-dozen Balkan subnationalities that could trigger a regional war. The 500 American troops stationed in Macedonia, under U.N. command, are a tripwire planted by George Bush. With the full backing of Soros, Gligorov seems determined to set it off. The Gligorov regime has published textbooks which show a map of a Macedonia many times larger than the present one; the Macedonian constitution is explicitly committed to the defense of the entire Macedonian people, not just the nation-state. The director of the Soros Foundation of Macedonia, Vladimir Milcin, is a militant Macedonian nationalist, whose belligerent statements directed at neighboring Greece have suggested the possibility of war. A major point of contention with Greece is over the name: Macedonia is also the name of Greece's northernmost province. The Greeks have suggested Nova Macedonia, but Milcin declares that he will "go into the hills with the guerrillas if they change the name."

How is it that Soros, who bitterly attacks nationalism, has become the chief backer of the Macedonian variety? The reason is that this nationalism is completely ersatz: except as an administrative unit of Tito's Yugoslavia, Macedonia has not existed as a nation since the era of Alexander the Great. Tito's elevation of Macedonia to the status of an autonomous republic within the Yugoslav federation, coequal with Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia, was a propaganda ploy aimed at aiding the communist side in the Greek civil war. The make-believe nation of Macedonia, like its Bosnian neighbor to the northwest, has no historical, legal, literary, or cultural tradition: it is a creature born of the imagination of politicians and ideologues, a "multiethnic" entity with no anchor in history. As such, it makes perfect sense that Soros is its chief backer and advocate.

It would be a mistake to dismiss Soros as just another wacky multibillionaire who can afford to enact his psychopolitical fantasies on a grand scale, a kind of anti-Ross Perot. His money and his message have gained him an audience in Washington at the highest levels. No one thinks Strobe Talbott was joking when he characterized Soros as "a friendly, allied, independent entity" and explained how "we try to synchronize our approach to the former Communist countries with Germany, France, Great Britain—and with George Soros."

The Soros network of foundations is not the only or even the major factor in his growing influence in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Through his vast financial holdings, Soros is a far weightier factor in the regional economy than, say, France or even Great Britain. This is especially true in Bosnia, where the Open Society Foundation in Sarajevo has served as a conduit for major projects undertaken by the government of Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic and his Iranian-inspired Party of Democratic Action. Schoolrooms in which the Muslim fundamentalist doctrines of Iranian mullahs are transmitted to a new generation of fanatics were built with Soros's financial and political support. Under the guise of "humanitarian" aid, Soros financed major reconstruction projects that enabled the Bosnian Muslims to continue the war.

While Soros's main interest is foreign policy, conservatives are more familiar with his views on such subjects as immigration and drug legalization. Bill Bennett and the *Weekly Standard* crowd have worked themselves into a lather of self-righteousness over the fact that Soros dealt both them and the Clinton administration a humiliating blow on Election Day, 1996. In Arizona and California, referenda decriminalizing medical use of marijuana passed overwhelmingly: Soros was a major contributor to both initiatives. The neoconservative line is that the war-on-drugs was voted down in two major Western states because, for once, the other side had money. The reality is that Soros merely balanced out the virtually limitless resources of various government agencies that actively campaigned against both initiatives.

While not many conservatives are worried about the prospect of the states deciding their own drug policies, far more troubling is Soros's response to a welfare bill that cut off $4 billion in aid to legal immigrants. In announcing his $50 million gift to various immigrants' rights organizations, Soros declared that the provisions of the welfare bill cutting off immigrants is "a clear-cut case of injustice." The pattern of Sorosian philanthropy in the Balkans is being repeated in this country: under the guise of multiculturalism and diversity, the idea is to funnel funding to one particular group of ethnic separatists (Bosnian Muslims, Macedonians, Latino nationalists of the American Southwest) then stand back and watch the explosion—and don't forget to sell short.

Bemoaning the fact that Gorbachev was defeated, denouncing the anticommunist revolution of the 1990's for not being "orderly," Soros complains that "after the dissolution of the Evil Empire we seem to have lost our bearings." What changed? In a statement unusual for its clarity, brevity, and directness, he answers: "I believe our concept of freedom changed. It was replaced by a narrower concept—the pursuit of self-interest. It found expression in the rise of geopolitical realism in foreign policy and a belief in laissez-faire in economics." Always careful to veil his own agenda behind verbal obfuscation, Soros is quite clear on the subject of just who are his enemies.

Let them be forewarned.

Justin Raimondo is a senior fellow at the Center for Libertarian Studies and the author of Reclaiming the American Right: The Lost Legacy of the Conservative Movement *(1993).*

LAW

A Burial Shroud

by David D. Butler

Monday was a good day, typical of good days in its variety. I was on the phone with another lawyer trying to settle a whiplash. His unlicensed truck driver ran into the rear of my man's car with a 50,000-pound cement truck. This case will settle.

Another client called. She was osten-

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sibly concerned about her disability case. She talked about her distress because the Veterans Administration Hospital is, yet again, releasing her psychotic husband. I listened and made the noises humans make for one another, rather as horses stand head to tail in the summer pasture, their tails whisking away one another's flies.

On another matter, I billed and got $1,450, also the mark of a good day. Disraeli said of the race horse owner Danebury, "He valued the acquisition of money on the turf, because there it was the test of success. He counted his thousands after a great race as a victorious general counts his cannon and his prisoners." We entrepreneurs eat what we kill. There are no Mondays, but there are no Fridays, either.

In the afternoon I showed a house which is tied up in a receivership to potential renters. They are black, have eight children and grandchildren. She gets Aid to Dependent Children. He started to tell me what he earns and does not report. I said, "Stop." She said, "Oh, there's a live-in rule, it's all right if he's not really my husband." I said I thought that was not the right rule and rented them the house.

At five I changed into riding clothes and drove to the stable. The fields of soy beans are beginning to ripen; each oak has one branch and one branch only of yellow leaves. At the stable, I walked down to the outdoor jumping arena down below the hill and just west of the little creek. I set a course of two and a half to three foot jumps. I walked back up the hill to the stable and groomed and tacked up Spot Market. By the time I was up on his back, the sun had gone behind the steep hill above the arena, but there was still light to jump.

We warmed up, circling the jumps in each direction a few times at the walk, then trot, then canter. Then we took the jumps one at a time, then two at a time, then three at a time. Then we went over them all, Market changing lead between three and four. After that we jumped them in the opposite direction. Horses like variety, too. It is bad to make them jump the same jumps over and over. I was very happy with him.

We walked up and down the darkening hills to cool down. A solitary heron flew north above the trees lining the creek. When Market was cool, we went back to the barn. We got there just as Jayne came down from the dressage arena on Whip. As Jayne got off her horse, she saw the feral tomcat lurking in the thistles down along the pond. He laid open Cleopatra, the young barn cat, with his claws while she was nursing her first litter. Jayne took Cleo to the vet who sewed her up. Cleo lived but was changed. She had been a great hunter and very friendly. Now she lives in the cobwebby rafters. When I see her slip down for kibble or water I think of the dead, risen by miracle in an old Tuscan painting, right yet wrong, back in the world but lost in it because of their experience.

We took the horses into the barn. Jayne cross-tied Whip in the aisle and told me to cross-tie Spot Market. When she saw that both horses were cross-tied, she took the rifle which she had brought down from the house and went outside. After stalking and waiting a few minutes, she killed the tom. Market jerked slightly when he heard the single shot. Whip, standing in the cross-ties and playing with them, whinnied.

In the 19th book of the *Odyssey*, Penelope uncovers the trick by which she held the suitors at bay while Odysseus roamed the world having adventures. Each day she worked weaving a burial shroud for Laertes, father of Odysseus. Though she told the suitors that she would marry one of them when she finished her work, each night she untied each day's work, and so the work was never finished. When I look at all my files, and I think of the clients and of the lives they have, often unwillingly, touched, I think that we lawyers reverse Penelope's trick. By day we attempt to untangle the evil tapestry spun each night by the flock of welfare recipients, a tapestry planned by Congress and, of course, by the hireling shepherds at the apex of the various social programs.

We pay people we should pay not to have children to have children. Many of the people we pay to have children are children. We pay them with money we tax away from people who should have children. Each payday for working families money is taken away; each month the Mother's Day checks go out into the poor communities. The gain and loss flows like water over a plowed field, carrying away, at first, imperceptibly, the topsoil, then cutting a little ditch, and then a creek, and then a river.

Someday, it is finished. The desert retakes North Africa, and 1,800 years later, a man writes a book on the decline and fall of an empire.

I am inside the system. I read their presentence investigation reports. I see the inside of their homes. The mother, white or black, is always on welfare. There is always money for cigarettes, always money for cable television, always money for drugs. The kids are always beaten—or worse.

I, too, am like the risen dead in the old paintings. When I tell what I have seen, my friends with both feet, both eyes, both ears, safely in the middle-class world, turn away. And why not? If I am wrong, I am lying to my friends, and, if I am right, the tapestry is a burial shroud. Thus, I am becoming like most people inside the system, in that my friends are, increasingly, inside the system.

David D. Butler is a lawyer in Des Moines, Iowa.

HISTORY

The Shooting of George Wallace

by William E. Thompson, Jr.

On May 15, 1972, I was a nine-year-old Little Leaguer determined to become the next Johnny Bench. As I headed home from the playground after baseball practice, our neighbor, Willie Kines, waved me over to his car. I remember thinking it odd that he would be picking me up, given that I lived only three blocks away. As I got in the first thing he said to me was, "Don't worry, your mother is going to be all right." Well, of course she was; I mean, why shouldn't she be?

Then, he told me why. My mother, Dora, had been shot that afternoon and was now in Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Maryland. Fear and confusion seized me until several hours later when I was taken to her room, where she personally reassured me that despite having a broken leg—which required her to spend 29 weeks in a cast—she would be fine.

Events that day, 25 years ago, occurred while I was at school and later at baseball practice. My mother, who was a cam-

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paign volunteer for Democratic presidential contender and then-Alabama Governor George C. Wallace, had attended the candidate's last campaign rally before the next day's primary. Wallace first spoke in Wheaton then traveled to a Laurel shopping center for another appearance. After a 50-minute speech, he descended the podium stairs—whereupon my mother greeted him with a hug and a kiss on the cheek—and headed toward the crowd to shake hands.

One member of the crowd waiting anxiously to meet Wallace was a 21-year-old unemployed janitor from Milwaukee named Arthur Bremer. As Wallace greeted his enthusiastic supporters, Bremer yelled at the candidate that he wanted to shake hands with him. When Wallace turned toward the voice, Bremer emptied his snub-nose .38 revolver into Wallace's body.

Wallace was hit in the abdomen, arm, and rib cage. The bullet to the ribs hit his spine and left him paralyzed from the waist down for life. In addition to the governor, the wounded included Wallace's bodyguard, Alabama State Trooper E.C. Dothard, Secret Service Agent Nicholas Zarvos, and my mother. Prince George's County police officers literally saved Bremer's life by wrestling him away from the suddenly murderous crowd. Upon being taken to jail, Bremer made one remark heard much too often from society's scum today. "Do you think they'll want to buy my book?" he queried.

May 15, 1997, marked the 25th anniversary of the Wallace shooting, which few probably remembered. Nevertheless, I recall it now for a distinctly personal reason. Last October, my mother passed away. Her breast cancer, first diagnosed in January 1995, had metastasized to her abdomen, leaving her barely able to eat solid foods as she neared death. To the end, my mother remained an unrepentant daughter from the "Heart of Dixie," despite having lived in the District of Columbia's suburbs for roughly 40 years. She cherished all things that reminded her of the place she always referred to as "home"—the numerous mementos of her Savior which exhibited her Pentecostal faith, her love of country and gospel music, and her shameless partisanship for Alabama's pride and joy, the Crimson Tide football team. And except for family pictures, the most proudly and prominently displayed visual reminders of "home" were two pictures: one of George Wallace, personally autographed to her, and a post-shooting one of Wallace with our family.

Like the candidate she once worked to elect, she was a fighter and never lost faith in, or backpedaled from, those things she believed to be right. About three weeks after she died, America re-elected Bill Clinton, simultaneously sending Bob Dole "home" as well—to the pasture of punditry and tacky appearances in commercials and sitcoms. Once the campaign ended, I was reminded more than ever of one of George Wallace's truisms: there really isn't "a dime's worth of difference" between Democrats and Republicans, no matter how much our national media want us to believe there is.

Wallace drove this point home in 1968, when he ran a strong campaign as the American Independent Party candidate. He never ceased to refer to the two major political parties as "Tweedledee and Tweedledum." He scared one academic so bad, according to Stephan Lesher, a *Newsweek* reporter and Wallace biographer, that the pathetic wretch even suggested Lyndon Johnson and Nelson Rockefeller form a coalition ticket to save America from Wallace.

In his book on Wallace, historian Dan Carter pointed out how close Wallace came in 1968 to his goal of forcing the House of Representatives to decide the election. Wallace solidly dominated the Deep South, except for North Carolina and Tennessee, which, Carter writes, "slipped away to Nixon by statistically insignificant margins." But, he adds, "had Wallace carried either of these states, a shift of less than one percent of the vote in New Jersey *or* Ohio from Nixon to Humphrey would have thrown the election into the House of Representatives."

Carter believes it was this election which prompted Richard Nixon to develop his "Southern strategy." At the time, Carter writes, political reporters claimed Nixon's "strategy" was simply a continuation of Barry Goldwater's 1964 appeal to cantankerous Southern whites—a charge Nixon called "bulls--t." Still, according to Carter, Nixon ran as a hawk on Vietnam, supported limited government and economic growth, and discreetly played the race card by citing urban unrest as a reason for more law and order. Nixon survived, barely, and came quite close to losing because he underestimated the vibrant appeal of Wallace's platform and failed to capture the governor's genuine faith in the ideas he appropriated.

Wallace returned in 1972, running under the campaign slogan of "Send Them a Message," "them" being the "exotic few" who taxed and bullied the middle class into supporting their utopian, welfare-state schemes. Incorrigible as ever, the former Golden Gloves champ ran a staunchly populist platform based on fighting busing, crime, taxes, welfare to deadbeats—foreign and domestic—and what he considered the gravest enemy to states' rights and the American working man, Big Government.

By May 1972, Wallace had shocked "them" by whipping "their" candidates, most prominently Senator Hubert Humphrey and Senator George McGovern, in the primaries. Prior to the shooting, Wallace had racked up wins in Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, and Tennessee—while running strong seconds in Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. The day after he was shot, he added victories in Maryland and Michigan. Lesher points out that by mid-May, Wallace had totaled more than 3.3 million votes—"700,000 more than Humphrey and over a million more than McGovern." Thus, the man most hated by Big Government and Big Media, as well as by many in his own party, was emerging as the front-runner for the Democratic nomination—and was shaping up as the biggest threat to Richard Nixon.

Arthur Bremer, however, changed all of that in an instant. At the convention, Wallace was still courted by the remaining candidates, who wanted his delegates' support. But Wallace was effectively finished. Although he ran again in 1976—my mother ran as one of his Maryland delegates that year—his handicap left him with little chance in national politics. He did manage, however, to serve another two terms as Alabama's governor after his wounding.

Nixon set the tone, Lesher argues, for every successful presidential candidate since 1968. Their success was due to co-opting Wallace's populist principles—a point Wallace understood well and trumpeted, even after he left politics. "Indeed, every successful presidential campaign from 1968 to 1992 (1996 may be an exception given the absolute paucity of original ideas and Dole's unwillingness to address legitimate issues) was founded on popular issues and

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rhetoric first identified and articulated by Wallace," Lesher writes. He adds:

> He can by no means be dismissed as a transient rabble-rouser who hollered "nigger" and then faded away as the nation returned to the mainstream. The reality is that Wallace *became* the mainstream, moving national campaign rhetoric (and, to a large extent, presidential governance) sharply to the right for the rest of the twentieth century and perhaps beyond. His brilliant 1972 campaign slogan was Send Them a Message—and he became the lightning rod for Americans to shout their "message" . . . loudly enough to be heard for the first time in decades. . . . Accepting George Wallace as America's political guru of the final quarter of the twentieth century requires a validation of his assertions. But most of those who set the nation's intellectual and informational agenda have been unwilling even to consider that possibility.

Unfortunately for Middle America, which has been duped by pseudo-populist charlatans of both parties for the past three decades, Wallace's prescience has meant that, with few exceptions, the two major political parties are now nearly indistinguishable on issues and equally unresponsive to Middle America's needs, as illustrated by this past election. The likeliest cause for this is the manifest lack of what is easily the most touted—but emptiest—word in American politics: courage.

Wallace always let people know where he was coming from, even if, as Lesher writes, he could never escape his segregationist past. But surely Newt Gingrich—and certainly Pat Buchanan—can sympathize with what critics were saying about Wallace and his supporters back in 1968. "It would become an article of faith among national journalists, Northern Democrats, and liberal Republicans that anyone criticizing growing federal government involvement in housing and business, ballooning welfare costs, or increasing crime rates was, by definition, a closet racist," Lesher writes.

My mother and her family were cotton sharecroppers in south Alabama when she was a child. During adulthood, she worked as a grocery store clerk and later became a bartender after her divorce, holding both jobs to make ends meet. George Wallace knew she was part of his following, which also included "a taxi driver, a little businessman, or a beautician, or a barber, or a farmer." Pat Buchanan understands them as well, but these folks are well beyond the understanding of the compassion fascists, multiculturalists, and one-worlders who control Washington as the millennium approaches.

George Wallace, for one, knew exactly how to handle the managerial class—the "pointy-headed pseudo-intellectual" who "can't park his bicycle straight" and the "briefcase-totin' bearded bureaucrat"—that tyrannizes Middle America. He would have thrown them all into the Potomac.

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Ted Turner Fights the War

by Alan Pell Crawford

The news that Jeff Shaara, author of *Gods and Generals*, will turn his novel of Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville into a made-for-TV movie should give pause hereabouts. A lot of folks who live within a rebel yell of Malvern Hill recall what Hollywood, with Ted Turner commanding troop movements, did to *The Killer Angels* and *Andersonville*. It was not pretty.

Turner, who strikes Virginians as about as Southern in manner as George Steinbrenner, has not been entirely chivalrous to the Confederacy in his movie-house renderings of the War of the Rebellion. *Civil War Times*, which rather liked the Turner network's adaptation of MacKinley Kantor's *Andersonville*, nevertheless noted that the guards at that Georgia prison camp were not only well dressed in the movie but downright "fat."

The reviewer's observation was not simply an aesthetic judgment on the actors' physiques; it implied a historical and moral judgment on the filmmakers' part toward the South itself. Turner, it now seems clear, has been foisting upon an unsuspecting public a number of new theories to explain hitherto unanswered questions about the Civil War itself, which must be resisted.

In Turner's version, the Confederates at Andersonville had plenty to eat themselves and deliberately starved their captives. There is nothing in the historical record to support such a claim, but this lack of evidence, we will no doubt be informed, only shows how crafty subsequent generations of Southern historians have been in covering up these sadistic misdeeds.

Watching Pickett's Charge in *Gettysburg* for the umpteenth time on videocassette the other night, I began to appreciate how profoundly revisionist a filmmaker Turner is. I had never realized that Turner wants us to conclude the South lost the war because its men were so godawful fat.

The spectacle of all those portly Confederate soldiers trying to get their lard asses over the fence between Seminary Ridge and the Union Center said it all. The decision to send those butternut-and-blue Rush Limbaugh lookalikes huffing and puffing across that expanse of unprotected terrain could not have been accidental, on Turner's part, or Robert E. Lee's.

Either the South really was a decadent culture, whose menfolk had grown slothful and stout from too much bourbon and fried chicken, or forces more sinister were at work: The Army of North Virginia in *Gettysburg* is led by a diabolical genius whose enormous duplicity has not until now been hinted at in the history books, much less revealed on the big screen.

The histories tell us that by May 1863, when Lee took his army into Maryland and Pennsylvania, his men were wellnigh emaciated. The Southerners had been subsisting on the crops from Virginia farms which, by this time, were barren. Lee's men needed food, so he took the war into the enemy's territory, where his men could live off the land. *Gettysburg* suggests that this expedition in search of foodstuffs was all a clever ruse and that Lee may in fact have been a bass-ackwards Benedict Arnold who never left the employ of the United States Army.

Lee's actions at Gettysburg and in *Gettysburg* have been interpreted by most movie critics and some historians to have been eerily "suicidal." Turner would have us believe that they were rational calculations, designed to doom a Southern cause which Lee in his heart of hearts opposed. Knowing full well that

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his troops were too out of shape to make any such charge across open fields and over fences, Lee deliberately ordered them to their deaths—and so saved the Union.

There is still time to put forth alternative explanations for the events depicted on the screen, and it is not too soon to do so. There is the distinct possibility that the Confederate soldiers in *Gettysburg* were such slobs simply because Turner relied on the services of hundreds of 40-something reenactors who seem to spend the rest of their waking moments wedged into La-Z-Boy recliners and who ought to get lives.

When they go to film *Gods and Generals*, Hollywood can again be expected to take liberties with the story, though it would be to everyone's benefit, and history's, if less portly extras were used. It is entirely possible that Turner was simply too lavish in the feeding of his cast, which might have been better served had he issued them all Jane Fonda workout videos, to be put to good use, say, six months before filming began.

If that is the case, then Lee was mistaken when he told his men that the slaughter in Pickett's Charge was "all my fault." As usual, Marse Robert was being too hard on himself. The Southern defeat was not his fault at all. It was Ted Turner's caterer's.

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Declaring China "Normal"

by William R. Hawkins

The annual process of extending "most-favored-nation" (MFN) trade status to communist China was to have a new twist this year. Beijing's friends in Washington were pushing for an end to this embarrassing review of Beijing's brutal behavior by granting MFN to China on a permanent basis. The move was to be attempted before China takes formal control of Hong Kong on July 1. To wait could derail the effort if China follows through on its announced plans to rescind a variety of the former British colony's freedoms.

Representative Doug Bereuter (R-NE), chairman of the International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, introduced a bill to repeal the Jackson-Vanik Act that sets up the waiver procedure by which the President can restore MFN status to "nonmarket economies." Any such waiver is now subject to a vote of disapproval by Congress. Bereuter wants to eliminate the oversight role of Congress, placing the question of trade terms entirely in the hands of the President. Further, Bereuter would lessen the sanctions that could be applied, limiting them to only modest tariff hikes. Revoking or suspending MFN would no longer be an option. With the start of President Clinton's second term, the China Lobby exuded confidence.

Suddenly, the drive to expand the concessions already given to Beijing on a unilateral, unconditional basis was stalled by a series of revelations concerning China's military, political, and espionage activities. Now, China's apologists are fighting to prevent any change in the policy of "routine" annual renewals of MFN. If they can wait out the current storm of controversy and make it through the summer unscathed, they'll be able to resume their "long march" of appeasement toward Beijing by year's end.

The China Lobby will continue to follow the line set out during last year's debate, when Bereuter argued that even discussing China's behavior was dangerous, for it

> can push China to unnecessarily become an enemy or adversary. That would undoubtedly prove to be one of the truly momentous tragedies in American and world history. The financial consequences of a cold war with China are staggering and the costs of an eventual overt conflict with the PRC are unimaginably tragic for the two countries and mankind.

It is apparently better to appease Beijing with soothing words, infinite patience, and large infusions of cash.

Some of this cash has been recycled to support Chinese political and espionage operations, which have flourished in the permissive atmosphere created by appeasement. Hundreds of Chinese companies, many owned by the People's Liberation Army, serve as fronts for agents seeking commercial ties with American businessmen to gain access to technology, capital, and the political process. Last summer, the FBI warned members of Congress—and tried to warn the White House—of Chinese attempts to influence the 1996 elections. The cash-obsessed Clinton reelection campaign, however, ignored the tip and adopted the same stance of studied ignorance of Chinese intent regarding illegal contributions to the Democratic Party as it has regarding Beijing's aggressive trade and military policies.

China's apologists have advanced the argument that "most-favored-nation" is a misleading term because it implies China is getting some special treatment. In point of law, all countries are entitled to MFN unless specifically denied. Therefore, MFN should be considered the "normal" trading status and be given to China as a "normal" government and a "normal" member of the world community.

The problem with this is that China is not "normal" and has not been considered so in American trade policy since 1951. From slave labor camps to the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction to military actions in the Taiwan Straits, China's behavior is more on a par with Cuba or North Korea, countries which do *not* currently enjoy MFN status. MFN was denied to the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact members, when their policies conflicted with those of America.

Trade is not an isolated facet of international relations. Many in the business community would like to have government officials think otherwise, leaving corporations free to pursue their self-interest without regard for any larger consequences of their actions. Trade, however, cannot be so isolated, especially when it involves industrial investment, the transfer of advanced technology, and the providing of other resources that undergird the political and military strength of nations. This has been well known for centuries; as Louis XIV's Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert put it, "Trade is the basis of finance and

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finance is the sinew of war."

There is no better current example of this maxim than China. Not only is trade and investment helping to build up that country's infrastructure and industrial base, it is pulling back to the mainland the loyalty of the "overseas" Chinese entrepreneurs who control so much of Asia's commerce and capital—and who hold influence with so many of the region's governments. Having once fled communism, they now find the mix of state-capitalism and renewed nationalism based on a shared cultural identity very appealing. The efforts by the Riady family in Indonesia to shape President Clinton's policies favorably toward China brought to public notice a trend that has worried trade and foreign policy analysts for over a decade.

More pointedly, commerce is providing Beijing with the hard currency needed to buy military hardware, to license technology, and to hire scientific talent. The United States ran a $39.5 billion trade deficit with China in 1996, buying five times as much from China as it sold to China. Despite the policy of "engagement" and a parade of American businessmen trekking to China, American exports were static at a mere $11.8 billion. This amounted to barely two percent of our total exports. Americans export much more to their natural allies, such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. The China market remains the illusion it has been for a century—but an illusion Beijing manipulates very well to entice American business support for an appeasement policy.

Russia has been the main source for arms. As Princeton's Kent Calder has observed, "with Russia holding the greatest military yard sale in history, the Chinese, flush with hard currency from their soaring, multibillion-dollar transpacific trade surpluses, stocked up." Last November, China and Russia agreed that future weapons purchases would be paid for with hard currency rather than by barter as in the past. This makes China a much more attractive market and "strategic partner" for Moscow. The dollars then get passed on again with more dangerous security implications. Radio Moscow has commented that "with money earned from the sale of Russian military equipment to China, Russia will be able to fund the development for itself of the most up-to-date types of armaments."

But Russia is not the only country lusting after China's cash reserves. France, Italy, and Israel, among others, have been contributing to China's military expansion. Geopolitically, the European states have little to fear from China to offset the lure of its money. It is the United States that is facing the tiger—but it is also the United States that is feeding it.

Liberal critics of Clinton's "engagement" policy want to link trade with human rights. But their moralistic hectoring of China will not force change. There is little outsiders can do to change the internal order of a major authoritarian power like China, whose ruling elite is determined to retain power. This also applies to the alleged "progressive" influence of Western corporations in China. Businessmen are unlikely to lead a revolution against a regime with which they are making money. They are more likely to defend it. An example appeared in *Aviation Week & Space Technology* on July 1, 1996, just after last year's vote on MFN by the House of Representatives. A four-page advertisement placed by the China Business Congress, a group of American firms promoting ties with Beijing, made the following astonishing statement: "China continues to operate a socialist command model, but unlike the old Soviet model, this one works." So much for reform!

The real reason for suspending MFN is to deny China resources which the current regime cannot be trusted to use in a proper manner. There is no sense in helping a country whose ambitions are generating fear in the region. The aim of sanctions is not mainly to pressure China to reform, but to hobble China until it has reformed into a government that can be trusted.

Today's policy is much like that of England's appeasement of Nazi Germany, which also had a strong economic component. Then, as now, the appeasers wanted not only trade but other ways to stimulate the German economy and expand its industry. In this view, promoted by the Economic Section of the Foreign Office, England could become valuable to Hitler as an export market and should even endure a trade deficit if it would improve relations. As Frank Ashton-Gwatkin, head of the Economic Section put it: "I myself believe . . . that this nearly mortal complaint [Nazism] will yield to the radio-active treatment of increased world trade."

The U.S. State Department echoed this same hope during last year's MFN debate when it said of President Clinton, "His vision is clear: U.S. interests are best served by a secure, stable, open and prosperous China." Last March, a deal personally brokered by Clinton gave Beijing's state-owned China Ocean Shipping Company a ten-year lease for 145 acres of the U.S. Navy base at Long Beach, California, which is being closed due to budget cuts. This intersection of an expanding China and a downsizing America was explained by Defense Department spokesman Kenneth Bacon as follows: "We have a policy of engagement with China. And the central part of that policy is expanding commercial relations with China. That's what would be done here."

Winston Churchill denounced this approach in his first speech to mention Hitler on July 11, 1932. He warned of Germany's growing economic capabilities "with her factories equipped to the very latest point of science by British and American money." England's appeasement policy was partially the result of its inability to confront Germany from a position of strength. Arms control agreements and fiscally conservative administrations had stunted London's military capabilities. Hitler was tempted to strike whenever he saw a window of opportunity.

Today, the strategic situation is different. The United States has unquestioned military superiority over China and should seek to insure that the gap never closes (indeed, it should be widened further by the deployment of a national missile defense system). This is not said to incite a military confrontation with China; just the opposite. Beijing knows it cannot directly challenge Washington—yet. The United States is still in a position to act with confidence. The problem is a lack of leaders willing to use America's current advantage in economic and military strength to fortify its preeminence in Asia. This failure may well cost future Americans a horrific toll in blood and treasure.

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The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Wings of Icarus

From 9,000 feet the triangulating mountains, snow-covered and hazy with spring, showed on three horizons bounding the broad brown desert of the Green River. Leveling at 9,475 feet we saw the steam plume from the power plant, Lake Viva Naughton, and the white scratch of clay road running toward the mountains north of town. The bumpy ride went suddenly soft, the engine caught, choked, and died, and I got out in the mud to turn the wheel hubs in. We continued on half a mile in four-wheel drive to a stand of limber pine and a compacted snowdrift across the trail, where we left the truck and trailer and rode horseback along the escarpment of Sheep Mountain with the sun and the fresh May wind in our faces. "Let's ride over and see Ben Brown's cabin," Norma suggested.

"What for?"

"I just want to see it."

"There isn't anything to see."

"I want to see it anyway," she said.

Ben Brown's cabin, broken in two by the heavy snows and filled up with garbage by elk hunters on their way down from camp, was in a stand of trees back a few hundred yards from the cliff. We had ridden within 100 yards of the wreck when a brown blur bounded through the break in the log wall and disappeared around a corner of the building into the woods. The mare shied and fled with the reins dragging, as Norma collected herself from the mud and the new grass.

"Bear," I said, helpfully.

"He must be a yearling. Where's Larki?"

"Over there by the cliff watching you."

Norma spoke gently to the shuddering horse before remounting and we rode on together along the cliff edge to a few scraps of aluminum lying among the broken shale. Years before a pilot out of Big Piney and his passenger had flown into the mountain side 30 or 40 feet below the summit. Arriving hours later at the crash site a Search and Rescue team found a disintegrated airplane and some human remains, among them shoes with the feet laced inside. While magpies

picked fragments of brain tissue from the branches of surrounding trees, Search and Rescue gathered up the plane and packed it off the mountain. Apparently they missed a few pieces. I reached for what looked like part of the gyroscope and turned it over in my hand.

"How could he have made an error like that."

"It was an early fall snowstorm. He was trying to land at the Kemmerer airport."

"This isn't the country for flying planes around in."

"It's no better riding horses," Norma said.

The warm weather held from April that year and we were with the horses in the back country by the second week of June, after the road along La Barge Creek dried out. We left the rig at the guard station on the Greys River and rode west up Corral Creek into the Salt River Range, where we fixed camp in a rocky swale below a long alpine ridge. Seated by the fire drinking coffee spiked with whiskey we watched a fine buck deer pick his way along the ridge line, turning his eight points in the sun's final light. At the sound of engines boring out of the sky I shifted the field glasses from the buck to a big commercial jet flying east by southeast, low enough that the house colors and ensign were discernible on the fuselage and tail.

"He's going to crash," I said.

"Of course he's not."

"I've never seen them so low this far out from Salt Lake."

"Look: three—no, four—bucks just joined the first one."

"Three hundred people going 500 miles an hour on their butts, drinking California champagne and watching Hollywood movies."

"Here's where you should come hunting this fall."

"While we're thrashing around 20,000 feet below in down timber, falling off cliffs and getting thrown by horses."

"Will you fix us both another drink? Don't put any coffee in mine this time."

In the morning we staked the horses to graze and climbed uphill over rough ground to Corral Lake in its rock-walled amphitheater. The lake was partly covered by ice, but cutleaf daisies blossomed at the water's edge. Seated on the gravelly sand along the shore we ate dried fruit and nuts and watched the watery reflections of the round white clouds drift across the wavelets. I lay back to take the sun on my face and was already half asleep when a loud echo arose in the rocky bowl like the roar of a giant conch shell. From a sitting position I observed the vapor shaft lance behind its bright metallic point across the opening to the sky. When the uproar had faded and died I asked, "Have you ever thought what it was like to be in the mountains 100 years ago, before there *were* airplanes?"

Norma looked surprised, then pitying, as if called on to answer a question by what used to be called in her native Tennessee a child of God. "Why, just the way it is right now," she said.

It was a hard ride coming out. The creek had risen to flood stage and there were slippery rocks and logs to get over. Several times the horses nearly went down, until we dismounted at last and led in the worst places. Where the footing was good the gelding would push from behind, and where it was bad he hung back at the end of the lead to gather himself for a leap calculated to put him exactly on the spot I had hastily vacated. Our shouts to one another were covered by the thunder of white water rushing over boulders and piled logs into black swirling pools descending by levels through green meadows edged by timber to the juncture of Corral Creek with the Greys River. Across the valley of the Greys the Wyoming Range blocked the lower half of the eastern sky, the glazed snowfields above timber line shining in the light of the westering sun. A few

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hundred feet below the summit of Coffin Mountain, an isolated brightness glinted from the surrounding brilliance. I called out to Norma, but the words were carried away by the racing stream. When we caught up with one another again I stepped aside from the trail and pointed to the gleam on the hanging slope.

"Look—there's another one."

"Another what?"

"Another plane. It was covered when we rode in the other day. The snow has melted from on top of it since then."

She took the glasses from me and studied the mountain side. "It does look like a plane," Norma agreed.

"They've had one missing from Afton since last November. We need to stop at the guard station on the way out and let them know about it." I brought the horse around parallel to the bank in the creek and stepped up from it as he moved out into the water, missing the stirrup and falling into the rushing, chest-deep cold. "I'm surprised the environmentalists don't have something to say about sky dumps like that. Get over here, you knothead sonofabitch," I told the horse, pulling hard on the reins.

The Forest Service spotted the wreck the same weekend but it took them a week or more to reach it by helicopter. It was the Afton plane, flown by a couple from California who had ignored warnings against taking off in a snowstorm and crashed at full throttle as they attempted to gain elevation to clear the highest peaks. The pair were strapped into their seats when the salvage crew found them, and the maggots were just beginning their own clean-up job on the mountainside.

All that summer in the mountains I was aware of airplanes, their intrusive rumble overhead and the unsightly contrails binding the sky like string, taking the measure of the earth.

"Where did this fascination with planes come from?" Norma asked.

"I don't know. I used to run out of the house when I was a kid to see the B-52s from the Air Force Base in Burlington fall out of the sky."

It was a dry fall that year, with a full moon for opening day of elk season. The herds grazed in the parks at night and timbered up near water during the day. Tracy Thompson and I worked hard to find them, riding horseback for long distances and going on foot through thick timber while outfitters in chartered planes scouted in circles overhead. On the third morning I shot a cow at the bottom of a steep gully half a mile from camp. I climbed down hand over hand to field dress the carcass, climbed up again, and went for Tracy and the mare. When we couldn't get her down the steep I snubbed her short to a pine tree and Tracy and I descended to the kill, where I boned the elk and packed the meat in plastic bags for Tracy to lug uphill to the horse. While we labored in the cold forest shadow a plane approached Indian Ridge from Fontenelle Creek, banked, and made a half-turn to the east over Minnie Holden Creek. "I hope the sonofabitch crashes," I said. "It's illegal to scout elk with a damn airplane anyway." We packed the meat into camp and rode down with it the next morning to Fontenelle Crossing behind a storm front that had moved in overnight. I bought a *Star-Tribune* in town and read that the Game and Fish Department had lost a plane the day before, somewhere in the vast wilderness area surrounding the southeastern corner of Yellowstone Park. The charter pilot and two game biologists assigned to track grizzly bears by electronic transmissions from their fitted collars had been flying with the radio shut down when the plane disappeared.

The Game and Fish plane was the object of an intensive search for two years before the Department gave up actively looking for it, but its fate was still a matter for speculation when Norma and I rode up the Wiggins Fork of the Wind River to Emerald Lake in the Absaroka Range. It was an easy ride following the creek between the forested blocks of compacted lava ash, carved by the wind and by water. We camped the first night on a gravel bar and climbed the next day above timber line to a thin high world of alpine flowers and elk in their red summer coats grazing across the steep-pitched greensward. Late in the day as we descended, leading the horses to stretch our legs, I looked up from my boots and saw light glinting from a side canyon across the blue haze of afternoon. It vanished when I had gone two steps farther and I backed the horse in the trail until I had the angle right again, and put the glasses on it. It could have been metal, or it could have been a patch of snow or a water seep. Whatever it was, it was on a ledge 50 feet or so beneath the canyon rim, hidden from above by an overhang of rock and visible from this little used trail for only a few minutes a day when the sun's rays found it.

"There it is," I said.

"What?"

"The Game and Fish plane."

I made calculations and marked the place with an X on the topo map.

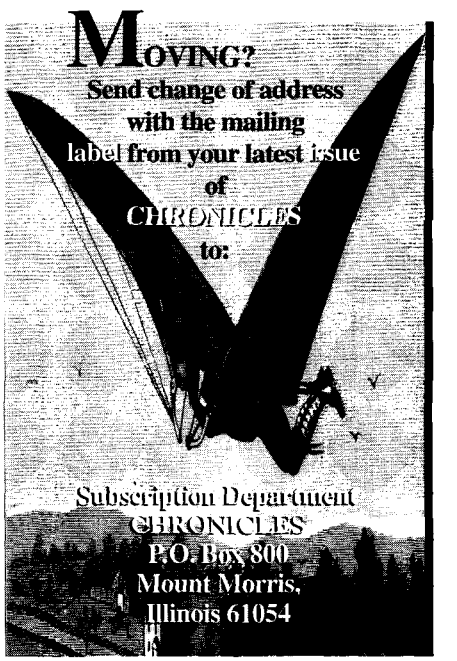
"I'll take it in to the Forest Service first thing in the morning," Norma promised.

The plane was found more than a year later by two women elk hunters who walked up on it 300 yards off a well-used horse trail: a burned-out airframe upside down in the tree tops, the three skeletons hanging in their harnesses. Airplanes are fascinating things, like women, fate, and God.

The following summer I rode with Norma from Brooks Lake 22 miles in to South Fork of Buffalo Creek. We found a big outfitter's camp with Eastern dudes in lawn chairs, a recreation tent, gourmet food, and no power tools in this designated wilderness area. There were mountain sheep on the heights and bear scat in the trail, and the smoke from forest fires burning to the west over in Idaho. In Dubois again we left the horses at a friend's ranch and went for supper at the Yellowstone Garage.

"It's a rugged, magnificent Paradise back there," I said over the first bottle of wine. "A fine place to die, when the time comes for it."

"Did I tell you," Norma asked, "it's where they found the plane? Just a few air miles from where we were camped."



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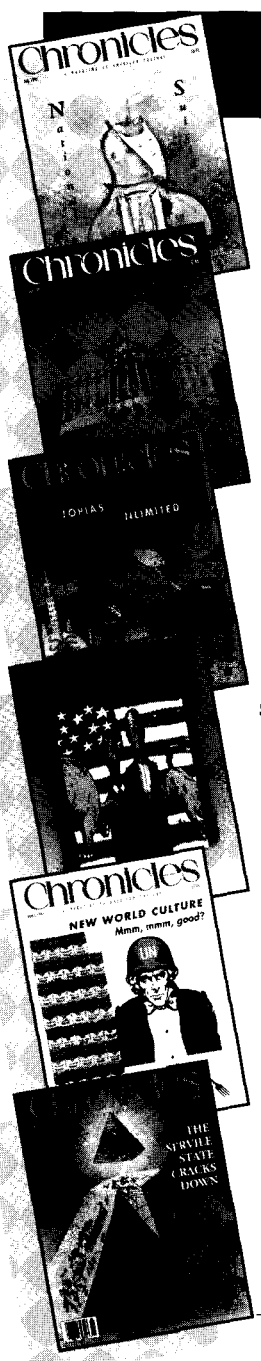

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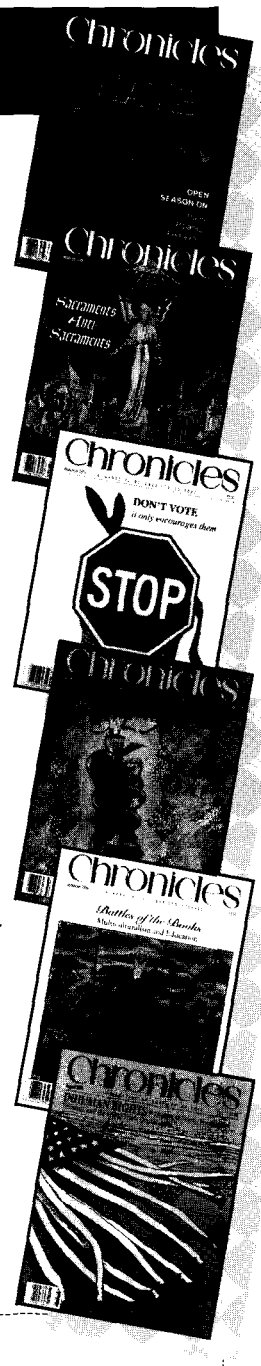

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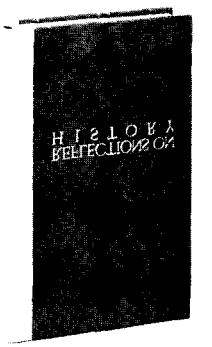

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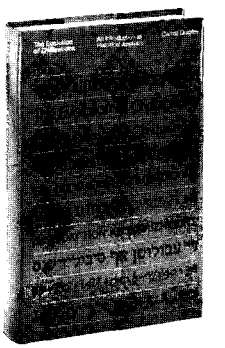

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